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ACCORDING TO MY LIGHTS



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John Hollingshead

From a photograph by W. & D. Downey

1. Pontons, Vollog, Paris

BY
JOHN HALL, ESQ.



WILLIAM LEECH

LONDON

1850

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ACCORDING TO MY LIGHTS

BY
JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD
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WITH A PORTRAIT

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS

1900

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Leaves - 1000

TO MIND
AIRPORT

TO
MY GOOD WIFE
ALICE
WHO IS MAKING THE BEST OF A
BAD BARGAIN

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THE trifles which compose this book are selected from the following magazines and journals, beginning with the *Cornhill Magazine*; whilst the latest contribution, "Gloomsbury," is taken from the *Morning Leader*.

Lloyd's, Man of the World, National Observer, Cornhill Magazine (THACKERAY editor), *Sketch, Table-Talk, Manchester Umpire, Sphinx, Whitehall Review, Sala's Journal, Pall Mall Gazette, Saturday Review, Star, Morning Leader, Daily Mail, and Punch*. I have to thank the editors and proprietors of all for leave to republish.

The verses are mostly from *Punch* and the *Manchester Umpire*.

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ACCORDING TO MY LIGHTS

THACKERAY

THE interest taken in Dickens and Thackeray is much greater in America than it is in England; and the interest in Dickens far exceeds the interest in Thackeray. Dickens is worshipped; Thackeray is admired. My known connection with both these distinguished men invited much examination-in-chief, and even cross-examination, when about ten years ago I visited the United States. I had to describe the two men, their appearance, their tastes and habits, and their points of resemblance, which were very few.

Thackeray was an exceptionally tall man, with very long legs. These gave him his height of six feet three inches, or more. He

was rarely seen without his spectacles, which rested on the flat bridge of his nose. This bridge had been broken in a youthful fight at the Charterhouse School. He was quiet and deliberate in his manner, and fond of putting one hand in his trousers pocket. He was a moderate playgoer, preferring the dinner-table with congenial society. He was essentially a clubbable man. His favourite night resort was 'Evans's' supper and singing-rooms in Covent Garden Market—a man's music-hall. He smoked and drank 'grog' in moderation, and listened to the part-singing by the choir-boys with manifest enjoyment. He was always more or less in pain from an internal disease, and this temperate recreation, according to his own account, relieved him. 'Evans's' at that time (in the fifties) was one of the three West End cellar music-halls beginning business at eleven o'clock at night, after the theatres. The other two were the 'Coal Hole,' in the Strand, now the site of Terry's Theatre, and the 'Cider Cellars,' in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, now a night club.

The characteristics of these three places in the thirties had been described in the 'New-

comes' by Thackeray, who thoroughly knew his midnight London. With the extension of 'Evans's' by the opening in 1854 of the new concert-room, built over the back-garden where the cottage stood in which the Kembles lived, the programmes became more refined, as ladies were now admitted to the Right Hand Gallery, screened with wire gauze like nuns at a convent. The singers, all men, were in most cases the same—Sam Cowell, Penniket, Sharp, Jonghmanns, Ross, Von Joel, Sam Collins, and others; but the songs were very different from those heard by Colonel Newcome in the 'Cave of Harmony.' The music-hall, as we know it now, was just coming into the world to compete on equal terms with the theatres, and not to act merely as their recognised grill-rooms. The sturdy generation of those days took its steak, chop, baked potatoes, and stout, in place of going to bed, immediately after its tragedies, farces, or comedies. The law allowed them, and they obeyed the law. Mollycoddling legislation had not been invented.

Thackeray had no artificiality, no assumed dignity, no 'side,' as it is now called. He was always simple and natural. He was not

a severe and methodical worker. He kept a secretary—an Irishman—who was no more business-like than his master. This secretary had acted in the same capacity with Thomas Carlyle. His name was Langley. He was a feeble secretary, but a good companion. Thackeray's workroom or study in Onslow Square was at the top of the house—the great man sitting at a table in front of one window, and the secretary sitting at a similar table in front of the other window overlooking the square. The back-room, seen through folding-doors that were always wide open, was very sparingly furnished (like the front-room), a small truckle-bed of the kind used by the great Duke of Wellington being the chief article of furniture. Thackeray, when he was working late (which was not often), would sleep upon this anchorite couch, so as not to disturb his daughters and the household. His writing habits were peculiar. He wrote a very small, neat hand, and used slips of note-paper. These he would often gather up and put in his coat-pocket, leaving his secretary at work, and stroll down to the Athenæum Club. Here, if he could get a comfortable table and was not

waylaid by any gossip, to whom he was always ready to give an attentive ear, he would pull out his slips, and carry his story a few steps further. In an hour or two he would again collect the scattered papers and go on to the Garrick Club, where, if not interrupted, he would resume his writing. This habit of composing in public frightened many of the old club fogies, who thought they were being caricatured for posterity, and no doubt helped to get him blackballed at the Travellers'.

Thackeray was not proud or 'stuck-up.' He was not ashamed to ride outside a cheap omnibus, preferring to sit by the side of the driver. I have often seen him going through Regent Street in the middle of the day with one of his long legs hanging down far below the footboard. He was not so well known in the streets as Charles Dickens—he was not so much of a 'people's man'—and he could pass in a crowd as a quietly-dressed, unobtrusive gentleman.

He was candid and truthful. In 1862 I was walking through the International Exhibition with him, and we came across Benjamin Disraeli. They saw each other, but showed

no signs of recognition. 'He has never spoken to me,' said Thackeray voluntarily, 'since I wrote the short parody of "Coningsby" (called "Codlingsby") in *Punch*.' Disraeli was a dealer in wit and repartee; but a seller, not a buyer.

When Thackeray started the *Cornhill Magazine* — or Mr. George Smith, the publisher, started it for him—he did me the honour to make me one of his original staff, and offered to put me up at the Garrick Club. At that time I could not afford such a luxury. He tried hard (hard for him) to get a new set of writers together, but the same old hacks turned up. When we met at the inaugural dinner at Mr. Smith's house in Gloucester Square, Hyde Park, it was Tom, Dick, and Harry shaking hands with Bill, Sam, and Bob, and our chief standing before the fire smiling, with his hands under his coat-tails. 'It's no use,' he said, 'trying to get new men; there's only a certain number of cabs upon the stand. Come to dinner.' We swarmed down the stairs, and sat in the room that had belonged to Sadleir, the fraudulent banker. I fancied I saw the silver cream-jug on the sideboard

containing the poison which he swallowed on Hampstead Heath. I tried to interest G. A. Sala with the gloomy topic, but he preferred the *soufflée de volailles aux truffes* which the servants were distributing.

Thackeray the editor was Thackeray the man—kind, gentle, amiable, accessible, and gentlemanly. He was turning the play which Alfred Wigan foolishly refused to produce at the Olympic into the novelette of ‘Lovel the Widower.’ This was the master’s first contribution to the *Cornhill Magazine*; as a play it never saw the light. Both Thackeray and Dickens were not so versatile as Charles Reade and Bulwer. The two greater men were novelists, but not playwrights.

Thackeray was essentially a last-century man. He knew and loved the age of ‘tie-wigs and square-cuts,’ to use theatrical jargon. To find him living in Onslow Square, in a neighbourhood of stucco, and in a house with a portico like a four-post bedstead, was a shock to the nerves—an anachronism. His place was Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, or Gerard Street, Soho. I told him so, and as old houses are generally gloomy and unhealthy, having, as a

rule, been ill-kept and neglected, he built himself a modern Queen Anne mansion in Kensington Palace Gardens, the 'old court suburb,' and, I am afraid, expended much more money than he originally intended. As I have said before, he was not a business man, and all the office drudgery of the *Cornhill Magazine* was taken off his hands by the publishers.

DICKENS

CHARLES DICKENS was as great a contrast to Thackeray in appearance as he was in his writings. Dickens was a short, upright man of spare figure, who held his head very erect, and had an energetic, industrious, not to say bustling, appearance. He was very methodical, and he looked it. His time was mapped out on a business-like system. He was, of course, materially assisted by his sub-editor, friend, and companion, Mr. W. H. Wills, who came with him from the *Daily News*; but *Household Words*, and after it *All the Year Round*, was really edited by Dickens, who also took a large share in its trade management. He selected his contributors, interviewed them when necessary, and examined many details which Thackeray left to Mr. George Smith, his publisher. Dickens

was a born trader, with a considerable power of organization, and his plans were laid down with financial prudence. 'Fancy prices' for magazine work in the early fifties were neither demanded nor expected. The repeal of the paper duties was yet to come, and bring with it shoals of competitive journals. These journals in due course increased the supply of writers—bad, good, and indifferent. The demand for writing also grew, and the wages for writing were soon affected by a rising market. The tariff for writing on *Household Words* and its successor, *All the Year Round*, was never at any time a sentimental tariff; but extra work, as distinguished from English composition, was paid for when demanded. As the 'Champion Out-Door Young Man' I fixed my own payment. I charged for my time and expenses like a commercial traveller, receiving another payment for my 'copy,' measured by the two-foot rule, with the liberty of republication in book form within a reasonable period. Dickens liked descriptive articles of life and odd corners of life, for in the early fifties the daily newspaper purveyed news only with social and political comment, and had not

turned itself into a daily magazine. I supplied these articles freely, as they gave me outdoor employment, which suited my active temperament; but I also occasionally wrote 'short stories.' I presume these stories 'gave satisfaction to my employer,' as, like his own 'Oliver,' he 'asked for more.' I explained to him that the construction of a short story involved as much labour as the construction of a novel or a novelette, while the pay was never in the same proportion.

Dickens was supposed to do all his literary writing work from ten in the morning up to two in the afternoon, but when he was struggling with a new and perhaps difficult story, this hard and fast rule was relaxed. At two o'clock he would start on those monotonous twenty-mile walks, undertaken with a mistaken idea that intellectual work required to be balanced with a plentiful amount of physical exercise. His walks were always walks of observation, through parts of London that he wanted to study. His brain must have been like a photographic lens, and fully studded with 'snap-shots.' The streets and the people, the houses and the roads, the cabs, the buses and

the traffic, the characters in the shops and on the footways, the whole kaleidoscope of Metropolitan existence—these were the books he studied, and few others. He was a master in London; abroad he was only a workman. His foreign pictures, his American notes, his Italian sketches, were the work of a genius who could never write anything that had not striking features; but in spirit they were deficient in sympathy, and often defaced by narrow insular prejudices. He could not paint a French scene with the same cosmopolitan touch as Thackeray, and although he might have been equal to a ‘Bouillabaisse Ballad,’ he never wrote one.

Those monotonous walks, those four miles an hour by the clock, one mile an hour by the milestone and the stop-watch, five hours of this pedestrian drudgery a day, regulated by an unbending system and a delusive theory, ‘took too much out of him.’ He suffered from lumbago, and no wonder. His town house in the fifties was in Tavistock Place, Tavistock Square; but his favourite home was Gadshill, Higham-by-Rochester, Kent, on the direct coach-road from London to Dover. Gadshill, I believe, is

about twenty-eight miles from the Strand, and to see him with head erect, walking like Weston, the professional walker, over Waterloo Bridge about mid-day on his road to his Kentish residence, was to see a man possessed by an idea which was not his servant, as it ought to have been, but his master. His appearance, with his far-off look, reminded one of the passage in the 'Ancient Mariner':

'As one who on a lonely road doth walk with fear and
dread,
And, having once turned round, walks on and turns no
more his head,
Because he knows a frightful fiend doth close behind him
tread !'

He realized this picture more often in the night, when struggling with a new story in its earlier stages. Too restless to sleep in Tavistock House, he would get up and walk on in the darkness hour after hour, until he reached daybreak and Gadshill at the same time. One morning he went into a roadside inn near Higham for a glass of rum and milk. He tried to pay for it with a very greasy and suspicious half-crown which had come in contact in his pocket with a bit of French chalk. The

landlord eyed the coin (and his visitor) with suspicion, and refused to take it. He had lived near his great neighbour up to that moment without knowing him.

Dickens's taste in clothes was a little 'loud'; he never altogether forgot the dandyism of the D'Orsay period. I have seen him (at his own house) in a bastard evening-dress, consisting of black trousers, patent boots, white cravat, a green plush waistcoat, and a black velvet smoking-jacket. He liked 'plain living,' the living he immortalized in his books. In the fifties, supper, as a meal, had not been put down by Act of Parliament—an Act (the Act of 1872) which was got by mollicoddling legislation out of make-believe respectability, and suckled by a knot of temperance fanatics (the legitimate descendants of the fire-lighters of Smithfield) who are trying to raise toast-and-water to the level of a Sacrament. Dickens liked suppers, and after a visit to the theatre a meal was always laid in the upstairs rooms at the office in Wellington Street, Strand, now occupied by Mr. Richard Elliott, the well-known music-hall agent, and husband of Miss Lucy Clarke. I say 'laid' advisedly, for in

the winter a man from Rule's was in an outer room with a tub of 'natives,' and a baked-potato man from the street was in the same room with his can of 'murphies.' Albert Smith, who copied Dickens in most things, copied him in this, and at his house in Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, where Mr. Dolaro now carries on a much-needed night club, in defiance of 'raids' and the fussy police, the can and the tub were present, supported by a piece of boiled beef that might have stood as a model to one of the painters present for the rock of Gibraltar.

Dickens, like Thackeray, was not much of a music-hall frequenter. Thackeray died in the very early sixties before the music-hall, by a process of evolution, had developed from the 'free and easy' and the 'tea-garden' (to say nothing of the two *patent theatres*, Drury Lane and Covent Garden) into the theatre of varieties. I helped to found the first of these, the Alhambra, in Leicester Square, in 1865. Thackeray, as I have said before, spent most of his nights at Evans's singing-rooms in Covent Garden, when the place was under the management of Paddy Green. Dickens went once to

the old Mortonian Canterbury (*De Morton nisi bonum*) with George Augustus Sala, but Sala wrote the article that sprang from this visit.

On another occasion he went to the Royal (then called Weston's) in Holborn with Wilkie Collins, and Wilkie wrote a rapturous article in *Household Words*, in which he glorified the late Mr. Stead, 'the Perfect Cure,' counted his jumps during the singing of his popular song, which amounted, I think, to about 1,600, and was astonished (and so was Dickens) at his power of physical endurance.

The Royal was built upon the site of the National Hall, Holborn, a favourite Sunday night lecturing-hall of Mr. W. J. Fox, the well-known Unitarian Minister of South Place, Finsbury (where Dickens used often to go on a Sunday morning), anti-Corn Law League orator, and sometime M.P. for Oldham, in Lancashire. The first music-hall—an oblong structure with private boxes on each side, built much on the plan of the present London Pavilion—was called Weston's, after its founder, Mr. Edward Weston. It was a sociable, middle-class hall, managed with much enter-

prise and spirit, occasionally attracting fashionable West End audiences when stars like the late lamented Nelly Power were engaged. Edward Weston was very fond of getting up comic song contests, his favourite champion being the late 'Sarah Walker' Taylor. Taylor was a good 'character' singer, his best impersonations being old women and idiots. He had a pliable face, and stood pre-eminent as what the French call a *grimacier*. As an all-round comic singer, he was inferior to many *comiques* of the time (notably Vance), and the contests which he invariably won at Weston's were given in his favour by a not altogether unfriendly jury. Charles Dickens's elder brother, Mr. Alfred Dickens, a regular habitué of Weston's, was generally one of the jurymen.

Charles Dickens, though he never succeeded as a dramatist, was always an admirer of the stage, and on intimate and friendly terms with the leading actors and actresses of his time. He was a clever amateur actor (he could do nothing badly), but I can hardly agree with many of his friends who looked upon him as a second Edmund Kean who had deserted the stage for literature. He was an intimate friend

and supporter of Charles Fechter, and was Fechter's financial 'backer' at the Lyceum, although Lady Burdett-Coutts was popularly supposed to occupy this position. 'The Tale of Two Cities' was one of his stories, written and produced by Fechter, in which Dickens did some of the work as a dramatist. This drama was the innocent cause of one of those curiosities of dramatic criticism which appear about once in half a century. The production was viewed with no very friendly eyes by an eminent critic, who was not on the best of terms with Fechter and Dickens. A rather severe analytical notice of the drama and the acting appeared in an important critical journal, which notice, as the Americans say, was a little 'too previous.' The production of the piece, at the last moment, was postponed for a week, without the critic being aware of the alteration.

I have no means of knowing how Thackeray regarded his valuable literary work in connection with posterity, but I have more knowledge of Dickens's self-consciousness. He had no doubts about his rightful position in the world of letters. For the last twelve or fifteen years of his life he never read any notices of his

writings. He knew and felt that he had earned his tombstone in Westminster Abbey. That he retired to this resting-place as soon as he did I fully believe was mainly due to his mechanical walks, and the exhaustion and excitement caused by his 'dramatic readings.' A day or two before he died, I am told on good authority, he was found in the grounds of Gadshill, acting the murder scene between Sikes and Nancy.

THE AWAKENED PUPPET

THERE are countless souls floating aimlessly in the vast sea of life which are not housed, and probably never will be housed, in perishable bodies. These souls have asserted their divine right of free will, and have declined to be imbedded in an earthly form, which rarely commands affection or respect, and more often excites aversion and contempt. I am one of those unattached souls. The scheme of life was put before me. I saw the short and doubtful span, the promised three-score years and ten in one direction, the smaller mathematical average in another ; the drawbacks of sleep and illness ; the curse or blessing of madness ; the joy or sorrow of human feeling ; the Ten Commandments held to me in one direction, the Thirty-nine Articles in another ; the fight of churches, anointed and unanointed, to

mould my present and control my future ; the penalty of drudging work or bitter starvation ; the whirlpool of meanness, selfishness, envy, hypocrisy, ingratitude, and pride in which I was expected to plunge, with no guide that I felt I could trust to save me from sinking. Right or wrong, I had but one answer : I will remain an irresponsible atom of the universe. Without trouble, exertion, faith, hope, or charity, I will silently watch the antics and pretensions of the superior animals around me, especially that very superior animal, man, who was evolved by electricity acting on the spawn of a frog.

I am a puppet—a hard, unthinking puppet. In an educational museum, in my raw state, being wood—and tough wood, too—I should be labelled as a ‘vegetable product’—of course, with a Latin name, to puzzle the visitors and justify a catalogue and a custodian. I fell into other hands. A workman of that class who once cut gargoyles, as a labour of love, for cathedrals, took me in hand, and by some unconscious instinct carved me into human form, square-headed, solid, determined, and repulsive. I was too stiff and ugly for a marionette, so I

accepted my destiny, and became an important unit in a Punch and Judy show. My master was not fettered by education, as understood in the schools. He could neither read nor write, but he could eat and drink. These were his accomplishments. His 'gifts'—for even the meanest human animal has 'gifts,' 'instincts,' or 'genius'—were a powerful and manageable voice, a quickness of hand, and a certain rough sense of humour. These gave him a command of the streets. Wherever he pitched his show he collected an appreciative crowd. He was the acknowledged head of his profession. One day he was seen by a critical scavenger who was always looking for art in the gutter. An article appeared in an advanced journal called 'The Day After To-morrow.' From that hour my master had the practical monopoly of a prominent street corner in Regent Street, whenever he was sober enough to claim it.

Our wooden family were thrown much together, but we had our silent likes and dislikes. The principal ruffian, Punch, was the constant and gentle companion of Judy, whom he battered brutally in public and consoled in private. I soon found that in this world we

often see things that have no existence, but never see the realities. I made a friend—as much a friend as my nature would allow me to make—of the puppet policeman. He was the representative of law and order, which told against him in my estimation ; but I was drawn to him because he always arrived too late—a true example of official imbecility. My artistic ugliness marked me out as the Nemesis of the show, the dreaded Shallabalah, the terror of Punch, the avenger of the defeated policeman. There was another terror, the Ghost. This was a highly artificial puppet, which gave itself airs, first, because it was so ingeniously constructed that as a skeleton it could fall to pieces and come together again ; and, secondly, because it had once had the honour of being in a marionette show, settled for a time in a concert gallery, and not compelled to prowl the streets for a living. We had to listen to stories of this wonderful show, whether we liked them or not, and of the clever and excitable Italian who worked the figures. I heard so often of this excitable Italian that I came to compare him disadvantageously with my stolid master.

And he certainly was stolid. He was more like a bull-dog than a man. When he was not working the show he had long intervals of silence, only relieved by beer. He may have been thinking, but I beg leave to doubt it. His language, when it was not bad, was limited. A mechanical doll might have been made quite as eloquent. The most exciting story—some choice sensational report read to him from evening papers published soon after breakfast—only elicited one remark : ‘ Well, I’m blowed !’

Everything had the same effect upon him. He was always being ‘blowed.’ He had a wife—no one could tell why. They seldom spoke to each other. He drank his beer, she drank hers. He worked the show, she nursed a baby and occasionally darned stockings. They had children—two boys and this baby, a girl—no one could tell for what purpose. The two boys lived in the streets, sometimes within view of the ‘pitch’ (the place where the show was temporarily planted), and sometimes not. The streets were their school, their eating-house, and their playground. One day the youngest of the boys slipped off the kerbstone, and was ground out of existence (such an exist-

ence as it was) by a brewer's dray. The mother, I am bound to say, cried a little when the news was brought to her, although she must have felt that it was a 'relief'—one mouth less to feed, one body less to clothe, if even in a fashion not much removed from the Garden of Eden; but the father did not go beyond his usual remark, 'Well, I'm blowed!' To do this stolid family justice, the drayman who ran over the wretched boy and the policeman who took 'the case' were equally stolid, as if such accidents were everyday occurrences. An old woman at an apple-stall, who knew the child, showed a little more feeling. She was a childless widow, and had had only an abstract love of children. At the inquest—held, as usual, at a public-house, in the fumes of stale rum and tobacco-smoke—the drayman, though innocent of anything beyond heavy, sleepy driving, showed his remorse in a characteristic way by comforting the bereaved father with unlimited beer. The show on that day had a full holiday of idleness.

There was one member of the company who stood between me and my stolid master. I called him the missing link. This was the dog

Toby, an old, artful, grizzled terrier, who had been before the public all his life. He had a silent contempt for us puppets, and a strong, selfish affection for his master. He was my master's most intimate and trusted companion. When he was not playing in the show he was at the heels of my master in the tavern or the skittle-ground, and in one of the latter places he had been lamed by getting in the way of a rolling ball. Until he was well he was better cared for than a human being, to say nothing of a despised puppet. He had a certain amount of education, but this had not destroyed his animal propensities. He had devoured a canful of tarts while the tossing pieman was playing at skittles; but before any trouble arose my master spent his day's earnings, and more, to pay for this glutton's meal. My master's family fared badly that day; but nothing was said, as everyone knew the showman's dog always stood before the showman's children. My master treated him as a sort of partner, like one who helped to earn the money. Perhaps my master was right, as his children earned nothing, and never showed any regard for their father. The boy who was not run

over, and was rather clever at street tumbling, went away with a troupe of acrobats without saying good-bye, and was never heard of again, except once, when he sent a friend to borrow a few shillings.

I saw nothing in my surroundings to make me regret my dormant state. I was called nicknames, of course. Inert Matter was one of these, but it made no impression on my box-wood, nerveless system. I knew, in my case, that *vis inertia* was a term of reproach; but it never made me ashamed of this quality of matter, or the tricks it played the bewildered workman. I have seen my master bend a dozen nails before he could repair a portion of the 'theatre' which had gone wrong, and if I had accepted vitality I should have laughed myself into apoplexy. I knew I could not enjoy laughter without tears, and I gloried in my stony-hearted apathy. Once or twice I was moved by some spirit in league with human weakness, which I had a severe struggle to control. The alarm I felt showed me that there was a tender point somewhere in my armour. It was my first warning, but a warning of what?

One day, while my master was giving a very successful performance at his 'pitch' in Regent Street, and I was in the middle of my celebrated struggle with Punch, who was gloating over his victims like a hero of Greek tragedy, and doing all he could to corrupt the minds of an audience properly brought up by the School Board, and regulated by the London County Council, two men in the crowd attracted my attention, because they were evidently interested in me.

'Sam,' said one, 'look there!'

'Look where?' growled the other.

'At that cove in the show. I never seed anythink like it.'

'Anythink like wot?'

'That wooden actor. Ain't he like that Bill Somebody we saw the other night as Bill Something in the play?'

'Bill Somebody!' replied the growler, with evident contempt; 'you means Bill Simmons in Bill Sikes. Yes; now I looks agen, there is a likeness.'

I am not about to write a confession, but those more or less illiterate remarks—the voice of the unsophisticated people, the unregenerate

playgoers, the modern groundlings—stirred in me a dangerous something, not exactly a feeling, but something perilously near it—the first promptings of theatrical vanity. I had been called an actor, qualified, it is true, by the uncomplimentary term of ‘wooden,’ but still an actor. I had been compared to a live performer—in face only, of course; but, still, I had been mentioned in the same breath. The breath may have been flavoured with onions, beer, and tobacco; but I had been singled out from my companions and mentioned! The gulf between me and them was sensibly widened, and this gulf now divided me from my only companion, the policeman.

I struggled with this suspicious and hateful dawning of vitality. I hardly knew what it might forebode, and I had the worst of all fears—the fear of ignorance.

My surroundings in some degree brought back my apathy. Time and the sordid brutality of life as I saw it would have cured my passing weakness if the inevitable and steady march of events had not willed otherwise. Our select ‘pitch’ in Regent Street brought us, to some extent, into fashionable

notice, and one afternoon I saw a smart man-servant in deep conversation with my master at the back of the green-baize covering. The conversation I know was of some importance, as master's wife, who always sat on a low stool at the back of the show, was also consulted. It turned out to be an invitation to give a private show to a young invalid living in one of the squares on the following afternoon.

The next morning master had his hair cut, brushed, and oiled, and an 'easy shave.' He put on a clean shirt, and borrowed a shiny, uncomfortable black coat from a 'pal' in the trade, which fitted him after the manner of a stiff packing-case. In the afternoon we went to a big house in a big square, with a large hall supported by columns, between which a fire was burning, although it was not winter-time. By the side of the fire was a hall-porter's large-hooded leather chair, almost as large as our movable 'theatre.' Everything was as quiet and orderly as if it had been a church, and the servants, nearly all men, crept about like phantoms. Our 'theatre' was easily carried up the broad staircase into a grand room filled with lustres, mirrors, statues, tapestry, rich low-

toned furniture, and a few pictures. The blinds were down, and the room was lighted with wax-candles. In a small white and gold couch-bed, with a pale-blue coverlet, placed near a bright fire, was a little girl of about eight years. Her round, gentle eyes were like those of a seal when it rises from the water; her thin hands, resting on the coverlet, were like transparent opals; her long golden hair floated down the pillows like rivulets on each side of her pale, flushed face. She had not yet left this world—a world to her of thoughtful care and affection, where her slightest wish was law, and where her path had always been strewn with roses—but she was very weak and very ill. We were there to please an odd childish fancy, as she had seen us once in the street from a nursery window. Our audience consisted chiefly of the child, who might have been an angel; but we were kept in countenance, if not encouraged, by her lady mother, a doctor, a couple of hospital nurses, and a few of the servants. We went through our old pantomimic story, but not with our unbridled street spirit. My master was subdued almost to the pitch of depression.

Judy for once was let off with half the brutal assaults ; at least two murders with violence were cut out ; the robberies were not quite so barefaced ; the policeman, as the representative of law and order, was treated with something like respect ; and although I, as Nemesis, was made more prominent than usual, I felt no pleasure in my work, no joy of gratified ambition. I even felt no jealousy when, after the show was over, Toby, the dog, was selected by the angel-child to be petted and fed with little sick-room luxuries. In the hall my master and his wife and child were regaled with cake and wine, and liberally paid. My master spat for luck upon the two bits of gold, according to his custom, but said outside in the street that he had never touched such hard-earned money. 'Never agen,' he said, speaking to the air— 'never agen. Nex' time they wants me they must put me outside and look out o' the winder.' He disappeared through the gaping door of a tavern, followed by the woman and the dog. I was left outside with my silent companions. I hated the mansion, and yet I was loath to leave it. It had shown me life from another and a softer side. It had cursed

me with knowledge — perhaps with feeling. Could I go back to apathy and peace? No. Could I go forward? Where? I knew there was an answer, but I dreaded to seek it. My master came from the tavern, scenting the street with gin and peppermint. Sadly I allowed him to throw me into my miserable box, a wretched, discontented, half-awakened puppet.

ONLY A MONGREL

'He liveth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small.'

S. T. COLERIDGE.

WHEN I first made the acquaintance of Mongrel Town, as an aimless, wandering London stroller, I was prepared for a little misconception as to my object and character. I got it. A thin, dirty, barefooted, sharp, terrier-like urchin—healthy in body from living in the open air, not being over-gorged with food, and being always on the move—'spotted' me from the dilapidated door of a squat house, dying of premature old age and 'Jerry' rheumatics. This boy thought proper to warn the inmates by shouting, 'Mother! git under the bed! 'Ere's the tallyman a-comin'!

This was hardly a compliment, but it might have been worse. I have been taken before now for a tax-collector.

Mongrel Town is not a slightly settlement. In the old Dickens days it would have borne half a yard of descriptive writing. Now people are in a greater hurry, and read as they run. They take their literature in wafers and essences, their newspaper leaders in paragraphs, and their novels in the form of intellectual 'meat extracts.'

Mongrel Town was proud of one thing—its gas-works. It had the largest gasometer in the world. This was its cathedral, its town-hall, its market-place, its monument. Fortunately it was never much troubled with tourists.

Outside the gas-works stretched a waste of swampy land, dotted here and there with small strips of garden ground, devoted mostly to the cultivation of sooty vegetables, and adorned occasionally with lop-sided, narrow huts, made of old wood and tarred canvas, and called summer-houses. A few hillocks of ashes and dust-contractors' refuse relieved the Dutch flatness of the ground, and formed a half-mourning avenue to the river. The Thames at this point evidently suited itself to its company: it was leaden, not silvery.

The 'residential' portion of Mongrel Town struck no discordant note of beauty. It had

been ingeniously constructed so as to evade as much as possible the provisions of the Building Acts. Dwarf houses ranged in monotonous lines on each side of 'undicated' or vestry-neglected roads formed the town. The houses were ill-treated by the tenants, but were fully inhabited. Population in Mongrel Town was fruitful enough to delight the Jingo, the believer in 'Empire,' the creator of standing armies, and the employer of labour. Children were produced without thought, set on their feet without clothing, and left to themselves, the wheels of a coal-waggon, the charitable public, or the devil. The maternal instinct occasionally showed itself, as it does among cannibals. Some of the open street-door holes were partially boarded across to prevent crawling babies getting into the street, and from there to eternity. One pampered infant was provided with an egg-chest with a see-saw floor, on which it sat, with a grinning dummy figure in front of it that bowed like a mandarin. The more the child stamped its feet the more the figure grinned, and the more it grinned the more the child laughed. These were known as 'the twins,' and belonged to a travelling show-

man and his wife—the ‘vagabonds’ of the settlement.

The most commanding corner block was, as usual, a gin-shop, with a gas-lamp about the size of a large fire-balloon, which helped to light the dingy street, saved, so far, the pockets of the ratepayers, and was the one bright spot in the sombre settlement. In this best of all possible worlds even a gin-shop has its uses.

I cultivated the acquaintance of the boy who had taken me for the tallyman, and, consequently, a capitalist.

‘What’s your name?’ I asked.

‘Dunno,’ he replied, rubbing his nose with the back of his grimy hand.

‘Never been christened?’

‘Dunno.’

‘What do they call you?’

‘Lots o’ things. Mostly Weasel.’

‘What do they call the dog?’

‘Scum.’

The dog was a large, loose-limbed, lank-bodied, weak-eyed animal caked with mud, of an uncertain type, with only one idea—food. In searching for food—honestly and dishonestly

—he had suffered considerably. A chopper had been thrown at him from a butcher's shop where he had been poaching, which cut off part of his tail, and one of his legs had been broken by a cart, which maimed him while he was burrowing for a bone in the rutted roadway, thinking of nothing but food—eternal food. The Weasel and Scum were inseparable. They shared the same bundle on the floor—miscalled a bed—and the same scanty meals. The Weasel had not much to give. The sliding-scale figures in the baker's window were eagerly scanned every morning by little domestic scouts. The Weasel was one of these. He could not read, and he was either too artful or had too much self-respect to say so when he could avoid it. Pointing at the card displayed amongst the precious loaves, he said to me :

‘Who'd 'a thought it 'ad been all that 'ere?’

‘Down again to fourpence,’ I replied.

‘Yus,’ he answered; and, followed by the limping dog, bolted off to his mother.

Scum had no friends, or very few, in the settlement, because he was not sightly, had less than no commercial value, and no sporting

spirit. He could not fight, kill rats, or draw badgers. Like the Weasel, his instincts were not very strong, except in the search for food, and his education had been sadly neglected. He was not invited to the Sunday dog-shows in the 'good, dry skittle-ground' of the Barge-man's Retreat, a damp and soddened pot-house on the banks of the leaden river. He was hunched from one end of the settlement to the other; superior dogs were encouraged to attack him; he was kicked by men with heavy boots, and by imitative boys with bare feet. The hulking crowd of ungainly hobbledahoys who passed half their evenings and their monotonous Sabbath afternoons in playing at pitch-and-toss under the railway-arches were always ready to throw a brick at him. His only friends were the Weasel—who often took his kicks—and an old woman who sold withered fruit and roasted chestnuts at a roadside stall, sitting in part of an old dilapidated sedan-chair that once carried the patched and powdered lady of quality of the early Georgian days between one Queen Anne mansion and another in the next-door village of Chelsea. In the cold weather Scum got warmth, and something more, under the old

woman's stall, or found refuge from a scowling coalheaver or gas-works labourer. Scum was as artful as Weasel. The settlement was not overridden by police, and when it had internal squabbles it was practically left to fight them out without official interference; but occasionally a 'rabies' scare asserted itself, and all dogs were ordered to be muzzled. Scum could not read, of course, but he knew the shape and colour of the 'notice' papers on the walls, and as no living soul in the settlement would have pawned his Sunday clothes—except Weasel, who had no Sunday clothes—to buy a muzzle for him, he distinctly withdrew from the public view for a few days, and no one, except Weasel, knew his hiding-place in the cinder-heaps. By this exercise of his natural abilities he escaped the inspector, the 'Home' at Battersea, and its lethal chamber for mongrels, and preserved a life which very few people thought worth preserving.

The Weasel's domestic circle consisted of a mother—before alluded to—who answered to Ebenezer Elliott's description :

'Bone-weary, many-childed, trouble-tried.'

She had had many children by her first

husband, but the open-air system of training—the happy-go-lucky system—had not, in the absence of sufficient nourishment, made them more than figures in the Registrar-General's great account. They dropped off one by one —‘seemed to pine away, like,’ as she graphically put it, leaving only the Weasel, who was tough and leathery. She married again—a stoker at the gas-works—which gave Weasel a not very sympathetic step-father. The stoker, whose temper was probably tried by too much furnace, and possibly to keep himself in health, felt it necessary to kick somebody or something several times a day. This is where Scum came in very useful. Kicks that would have gone to the Weasel went to Scum, whose elastic ribs were easily broken and as easily mended. He was always in perfect training.

The stoker was a temperance man, and a breeder of game-cocks. In spite of Acts of Parliament, he fought his birds occasionally with spurs like packing-needles. This made him respected in the settlement. He was distinctly human. He was ‘werry partial,’ as he expressed it, to baked sheep's head ; and he played a little on the accordion.

A

Weasel's mother and the stoker had one baby, a girl, who came, as the settlement said, to put Weasel's 'nose out of joint.' This child was almost as much pampered as the showman's baby. If the stoker more or less ruled the settlement, the baby ruled the stoker; consequently the baby was in reality Queen of Mongrel Town. The father played the accordion to it after stoking hours; and on its birthday a wandering Punch and Judy show that had called on its rounds to pay a friendly visit to the showman's family was retained to give a special performance for the stoker and his child, in which the Weasel, as a great favour, was allowed to participate. Scum was out of this entertainment, and on the prowl, as he always avoided the stoker as much as possible.

The summer came, according to the calendar, on the river, and the favourite amusements of the youth of Mongrel Town began. One of them was to stand on the sullen-looking bridge that crossed from bank to bank, and spit or drop stones on the passing craft. It was worth no one's while to land and pursue the imps, for they ran like race-horses, and could give the

slimmest policeman (in regulation boots) a mile, and beat him.

During this particular summer, owing to a great building strike, there was less smoke on the river and more sun. The same cause allowed a few barge-loads of planks, moored off a timber-wharf, to lie floating idly in a little side harbour, and these were seized upon by the imps of Mongrel Town for rafts on which they played the favourite game of Robinson Crusoe. Legs that had been the colour of Ashantee envoys began to look a beefy red, and hands that were ignorant of soap became suddenly well acquainted with water. Weasel was an active leader of the sports, first as Man Friday, and then, after he got washed, as Robinson Crusoe. These were only names to some of the imps, but, for all that, were familiar names. Many thought they were directors of the great gas-works.

Where Weasel was, Scum was not far distant, and to the amazement of all he showed the best qualities of a first-rate water-dog. Perhaps in the long-forgotten past the kicked and despised mongrel may have had some great water-spaniel as an ancestor, or he may have only been a

mongrel in disguise. His character rose in the settlement ; the stoker had not kicked him for three whole days, including a Sunday. It was destined to rise still more. The popularity of the Crusoe rafts soon increased, and babies in arms—if the arms of grubby child-nursemaids could be called arms—were brought down, first as spectators and then admitted as passengers.

One day—one miserable day—the planks of a raft separated, and the children on it were thrown in the water. Some of the most active struggled out, some got astride blocks of wood, and some—a few—did their best in the panic to save others. Amongst those who went under were a baby and its child-nurse. Scum dived in and came up with the baby in his big, gaunt jaws, and brought it safely to land. It was the stoker's baby, and he was there, pale and agonized, never expecting to see it again alive. Scum, for the first time in his life, took no notice of the stoker, but dived in again under the tangle of planks after the infant nurse. The floating timber over their heads was too much for them. It was Scum's last exit.

At the end of the week the death-roll included one girl, two boys, and a dog—a mongrel. One

of the boys was little Weasel. They separated the three 'Christians' from the brute beast that perisheth ; but Scum had his triumph. He was buried in a bit of ground adjoining the Baptist chapel, which soon became consecrated. Most of the Mongrel Town children were mourners, and strewed his grave with flowers. These flowers looked sooty to the eye, but meant more than the big conservatory at Kew Gardens. Mongrel Town, instead of remaining a term of reproach, became to some extent a term of honour. If the dwellers in the Wilderness never quite realized the wish of the poet,

' Never to let their pleasures or their pains
Bring sorrow to the meanest thing that breathes,'

they did their best ; and none of us can do more.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE TAVERN

THE changes that have come over the licensed victualling trade during the last sixty years are so widespread and so remarkable that they fully merit the honour of being dignified with the scientific name of 'evolution.' In theory, of course, a licensed victualler, as the words imply, was always supposed to sell victuals, or food, as well as drink, and to have attached to his premises at least one room, with a fireplace and a window, as well as a door, in which the customer could sit down and eat his bit of bread and cheese, or his penny saveloy (sometimes called a 'polony'), and his *panem* (pure Latin), while the 'rum cull' (slang) of the *casa* (pure Italian) served him with his 'modest quencher.' The food was nearly always brought in by the customer, and rarely provided by the publican.

The counter of an ordinary public-house sixty years ago was laid out purely for drink business, and the 'bar-parlour,' or a small enclosure with seats, was reserved for comfortable smoking. A travelling conjurer sometimes looked in, with a pack of cards, a trick box or two, and a doll and bag (for the doll trick) in his capacious pockets. By the kind permission of the landlord he gave a little exhibition of his skill, taking his payment by a small collection. In those days he was called the 'hanky-panky man,' the high-sounding term of 'prestidigitateur' not having then been imported.

The first glimpse of food seen on a public-house bar counter took the form of biscuits—one a tough production, called a 'captain's' biscuit; the other, not quite so tough, called an 'Abernethy' biscuit (I presume after the celebrated, but rather grumpy, doctor). It may have been invented by the man who told his over-fed patients to 'live on sixpence a day, and earn it.'

These biscuits not being suited to delicate or imperfect teeth, and not easily softened in liquor, were soon supplemented with something softer—sponge-cakes, the shape of a club on a pack

of cards, and an oval piece of pastry called a Banbury tart. These delicacies were placed upon the counter and covered with a glass cover to keep them from the dust, as they often remained many days 'in stock' without being touched or eaten. In some houses that were managed on broad and liberal principles the visits of a now extinct wandering tradesman, the tossing pieman, were tolerated, if not encouraged. This class of pieman (immortalized by Dickens as a professor of 'seasoning') had little pies or tarts containing bits of mutton or eels, which he would sell for a penny apiece, or toss you for twopence or nothing.

Another advance-step in the introduction of food was made about this time (in the forties) by the 'beer-shops,' which had just been established. They came in with so-called 'fourpenny ale,' the principal brewer of which was Mann, of the Mile End Road. These rivals to the fully-licensed houses spread with considerable rapidity, the license being more easily obtained, the licensee, as a guarantee for the good conduct of the house, being compelled to live upon the premises. Country brewers (the 'lager beer' brewers of that

period) competed with Mann for the supply of 'fourpenny,' and it was left for the Alton Ale Brewery to introduce the sandwich into the beer trade, and to post up the announcement in the many places then under their control: 'A glass of ale and a sandwich for fourpence.' This new development of business must have been very successful, for it provoked the attacks of the satirist. A beer-shop in the City Road, within sight of the Angel at Islington (which, as a matter of fact, is in Clerkenwell), put up the following elaborate parody of the Alton ale announcement:

'Siste Viator!
Scientiæ Potusque Combinatio!
A Glass of Ale and an Electric Shock for Fourpence.
Intra Bibe Suscipe Solve.'

The 'glass of ale and a sandwich for fourpence' did not tempt the fully licensed houses to act as mere copyists, and they followed suit with a very substantial production that would stand a good deal of rough usage on any counter without showing much damage. This was called a 'Melton Mowbray Pork Pie,' and it inspired many so-called comic writers—the early *Punch* contributors, followers of Albert

Smith, and others—to produce many jokes, bad, good, and indifferent.

By degrees the more or less solitary pork-pie gave place to the ‘luncheon counter,’ with long strips of table-cloth, condiments, pickles, cold meat, bread, knives, forks, plates, and even toothpicks. In a short time the luncheon-counter was replaced by a ‘grill-room,’ and chops, steaks, kidneys, sausages, and the luxury of hot vegetables made their appearance. The next development was the advent of the hot joint from twelve to three; then special days were set apart for steak-puddings or tripe and onions. By degrees fish crept in, followed by soup, and even pastry, until at last the public-house confessed, with a blush, that it had at last consented to be married to a restaurant.

The public-houses of the United Kingdom are now great food caterers, turning over twenty millions sterling a year, a fact that was most unaccountably kept from the Royal Liquor Licensing Commission.

THE POT-BOY

THE name of 'pot-boy' still lingers about the tavern, but it is little more than a name, a memory of the past, a more or less antiquarian bit of ancient social history. The pot-boy was associated with pewter, and pewter was associated with the pot-boy—in many cases good old pewter that is now eagerly sought for by collectors, that often fetches as high a price as old Sheffield plate, if it scarcely reaches the record of Old Whitbread's celebrated 'service.' The pot-boy loved his pewter ; he passed many hours each day in its company ; he polished it with care and affection, was proud of its silver brightness, and taxed his ingenuity to discover any new cleansing material. His three measures were the pint, the half-pint, and the quart pot—measures devoted to 'glorious beer' ; the quartern, the half-quartern and the gill he

tolerated without admiration. As an artistic cleaner he gave them a good appearance, but that was all.

The pot-boy lived in his shirt-sleeves, except on the days when he had a holiday, and visited some other favourite public-house in the suburbs—then the country—having the attractions of a quoit-ground and a ‘good dry skittle-ground.’ On these occasions his glossy-black coat and trousers were made of shiny West of England broadcloth, somewhat expensive in the days before Doudney sent out the first street ‘sandwich-men’ with the stirring legend, ‘Reform Your Tailors’ Bills,’ and he even endured the misery of a ‘‘igh tall ‘at’—a silk or beaver hat—for the sake of appearances. He was no longer a pot-boy, a free being in shirt-sleeves, but the germ of the future publican. The skittle or the quoit-ground put him at his ease, as he took off his coat and waistcoat and bird’s-eye fogle for the game, though he suffered sometimes by having his blucher boots made more for elegance than comfort.

The pot-boy in his working hours was never so much in his glory as when going ‘his rounds.’ His apron was as clean as that of a French

waiter in a first-class Parisian restaurant, his hair was nicely oiled, his plush waistcoat (double-breasted) was built for effect, his cap was a little jaunty, his kicksies had an 'artful fakement' down the bottom, his shirt was of the latest coloured pattern, and, if times were good, was adorned in the front with a brooch as big as a mussel; his two nests of portable shelves, like rabbit-hutches, surmounted by long bar handles, which he carried on each side, like a milkmaid carries her pails, but without the suspending yoke, were as bright as paint could make them. Inside these boxes were ranged the bright pewter quarts of foaming beer. At mid-day, especially, he was waited and watched for by the female servants in the 'terrace' or the 'crescent'—two names that have been almost lost in the modern 'mansions' and 'gardens'—and the coquettish way in which he poured the liquor from the pewter jug to the earthenware mug was as pretty as a picture. He is a thing of the past, swept away by altered manners and the efforts at improvement, but his memory—a pleasant memory—is not yet lost in the mists of antiquity.

THE 'GOOD DRY SKITTLE- GROUND'

A FEW taverns in the centre of London, and nearly every roadside house in the not very distant suburbs, were not considered complete in the thirties without an outbuilding entitled to the description at the head of this short chapter. The 'ground' was sometimes called 'dry' without altogether meriting that part of the title. It generally had a skylight roof, which, unless carefully watched, was apt to leak, and the 'ground' underneath in wet weather was more or less damp. When carefully watched, the alley was dry, and the players comfortable and happy. Underground alleys in the centre of London, such as the one which existed in Little James Street, Covent Garden, and the other which was constructed under Bertolini's Italian Café, in

St. Martin's Street, Leicester Square, were never troubled with rain-water; but the Barge-man's Paradise, at the Fox-under-the-Hill, where the Thames Embankment and the Cecil and Savoy Hotels now stand, was often subject not only to 'heavy wet' in the shape of water as well as beer, but to troublesome tidal influences.

Skittles, as a game, stretches back to the Middle Ages, where I don't propose to follow it. By skittles I mean 'ninepins,' set up in a diamond-shaped form on a solid wooden frame with iron plates to mark the position of the pins. This game was occasionally varied by 'four-corners,' or 'Dutch pins' (the game came from the Low Countries, and is immortalized in Rip Van Winkle), the pins in this case being more than double the size of the slim ninepins. The science of the game was a perpetual series of 'cannons.' The balls used were flat cheese-shaped balls, adapted to playing screw strokes 'over the thumb,' or throwing 'a broad skiver.' Some players liked a light ball, and some a heavy one. Some threw a sharp, incisive stroke, called, for some reason, a 'single ball'; others (the least skilful players) threw what was

called a 'double ball'—a ball that was made to revolve on its broad side as it left the hand of the player. If the pins were 'floored' (a classic expression used by Byron in 'Don Juan'), it was more by brute force than science. Science was always justified, as the board was often left with many straggling 'doubles,' and heaps of useless 'dead wood' to be jeered at.

When skittles was the favourite game of a simple-minded generation, the landlord in business generally wore a white or whitey-brown apron, like his pot-boy. Billiards then were scarcely known outside the few leading clubs, though a bastard billiards, called very properly 'bagatelle,' was replacing 'shove-halfpenny' in the tap-room. 'Shove-halfpenny,' for some mysterious reason known only to the Legislature, was declared illegal. I have played the game at Oberammergau, in Bavaria, in the lager beer intervals of the 'Passion Play,' with some of the representatives of Biblical characters. If I played it at Bethnal Green I should be taken into custody.

The 'good dry skittle-ground,' when kept select, which it generally was, was as favourite a 'lounge' of the middle-class neighbours and

tradesmen as the tavern parlour. The music-hall, as we know it now, had not been invented, though 'harmonic meetings' were occasionally held in the 'long-room' upstairs, if the tavern had a long-room, which on other occasions was devoted to the purposes of a Masonic lodge or a meeting-place for the Ancient Order of Buffaloes. The age was the age of long pipes ('churchwardens') and pewter pots; rum and water hot, with a little lemon and sugar, had not gone out of fashion; 'porter' was drunk with enjoyment out of the cool metal mug; 'soda-water' was a legend. Cigars were known, certainly, but cigarettes had never been heard of, and the luxurious smoked a meerschaum pipe, which also came from Holland, and was afterwards called a 'mynheer' (alluding to Van Dunck), which its owner tried his best to colour. More than this, the American bowling alley had not been imported by Kilpach, of Covent Garden. The pot-boy, in his hour of ease, was allowed in the skittle-ground as the favourite attendant, where he earned a few tips as the 'setter up' of pins. This setting up was an art. One pot-boy would arrange the whole nine on their legs while another pot-

boy was fumbling with a front double. The arcadian and happy simplicity of the skittle-ground was occasionally disturbed by the entrance of professional 'skittle sharps,' who concealed their skill, and made a living by betting on it. They were generally known, like the tramping conjurers of the period, and when 'spotted,' or failing to find gullible 'mugs,' they often gave an example of their art for the gratification of the company. A pin set up in the centre of the diamond four was knocked out, leaving the four corner pins standing. A penny put on the top of this centre pin was knocked off without disturbing the five, or a pin mounted on the centre pin was knocked clean away with the same result in the same manner. As players, when not known, the 'sharps' behaved themselves, and 'made one of four' in the most agreeable manner. Some grounds encouraged them, and some not, but classed them with the pig's-trotter seller and the tossing pieman.

THE RAT AND COCKROACH

THERE is one triumphant absurdity of our licensing system which I am never tired of contemplating—the rebuilding of the pot-house. I hold, we will say, that great and blessed privilege, a full wine, spirit, and beer license—a seven days' license—an on and off license. This license is enshrined in an old tumble-down drinking temple, called the Rat and Cockroach, a favourite house with antiquaries, because when one of Pickford's vans rumbles past the Rat and Cockroach shakes like a calf's-foot jelly, and lives on the reputation of having been a favourite tap-house of Jack Sheppard.

The Rat and Cockroach, in spite of its historical reputation, is, however, condemned as a dangerous structure by the district surveyor, and no appeal to the Society for the Preserva-

tion of Fossil Buildings can save it. While they are weeping over the necessity of losing such a valuable specimen of medieval architecture (there are plenty more left in Holywell Street and Wych Street), the roof falls in and destroys an antediluvian garret (antediluvian, because it existed before the house was licensed) on the second floor. The brewer and the distiller, the soda-water merchant and the biscuit merchant, to say nothing of the pork-pie factor, are consulted, and it is decided to rebuild the pot-house with all the latest improvements—pot-bellied windows, with small panes of glass that no one can see out of, polished mahogany narrow passages, lamps about the size of passenger balloons, and ceramic tiled walls representing Sir John Falstaff in a beastly state of intoxication. The first step taken is to demolish the old building. This, according to an old superstition of the licensing laws, must be done without removing the owners and managers, the tubs, the taps, and all the paraphernalia of the bar, to avoid vitiating or losing the sacred license. The bar and bar-parlour are encompassed with timber ; cross-beams, supported by perpendicular and

oblique beams, are cleverly inserted across the ceiling ; a match-box casing is put round this kernel of the pot-house ; and the Rat and Cockroach, for the time being—that time being six months, at least—might be appropriately re-christened the Brickbat and Packing Case.

For several weeks, until the work of demolition has ceased, the business is carried on under superhuman difficulties, but supported by a devoted band of customers, who seem to take a delight in drinking beer that is thickened with brickdust, in dodging bricklayers' labourers and defeating obtrusive scaffold - poles. The pot-boy sleeps under the counter all this time, not to break the continuity of possession, and though fairly temperate and not addicted to perforating casks, he rises every morning like a giant refreshed with wine. Cement is made acquainted with brandy, and brandy with cement ; the brown stout becomes browner every day, and appears, owing to some unknown element in the liquor, to become more substantial and nourishing—quite as much a solid as a fluid ; a builder is saved from sudden death by being too drunk to know his dangerous position on the scaffold (this is not an argu-

ment in favour of drinking); an iron girder, also drunk, smashes about five pounds' worth of glass, which increases instead of diminishing the price of the contract; for twenty-four hours the whole establishment is kept in suspense, while it is a question whether the next house, said not to have been properly shored up, will fall and crush us, with about sixty 'residential chambers.'

The pot-boy strikes and leaves because he cannot get compensation for a black eye, being unable to fix responsibility on any solvent person. Another pot-boy comes, who declines to sleep under the counter, is very partial to rum, and robs the till, and the only comfort is the summer's afternoon and the drive in the one-horse 'shay,' with the showy trotting horse. Hendon in those days is something more than Hendon. The Welsh 'Arp (from *arpa*, Italian) is the *Arpa Angelica*—a foretaste of Paradise.

THE ILLEGAL PERIWINKLE

A FABLE FOR THE LICENSING COMMISSION

ONCE upon a time there were three periwinkles born and brought up together, but doomed, like many more important atoms of creation, to go into the world to fulfil their destiny. They parted, never to see each other again, and went in different directions. One found its way to a street stall, where, although it lived in the open air like a vagabond, it was a decent member of society, observing and respecting the law, occupying a perfectly legal position, and being sold long after midnight (with the accompanying pin) to a night cabman, and eaten by the light of a tow and oil lamp without producing any mollycoddling prosecution.

Another found its way to a late fishmonger's, where everything was sold to be taken or sent

away, where no pincushion was ever kept, and nothing, not even an oyster, was 'consumed on the premises.' It was carried long after midnight into an appreciative but late-hour family of printers, and was eaten in the usual way in a sky-parlour, and died respected.

The third periwinkle fell into more evil ways. It got into a 'refreshment house,' or coffee-shop, bound to hold an excise license, and close at ten o'clock at night, after which hour no self-respecting periwinkle (in a coffee-shop) ought ever to be seen by mortal eyes. One riotous night it was bought and eaten by a reckless roysterer ('on the premises') at ten minutes past ten, as proved by the parish church clock, duly checked by Greenwich time, and its master was prosecuted by an ever-watchful police, who look after illegal periwinkles, burglars and murderers.

THE PIONEERS OF EARL'S COURT

IN no world does the principle of evolution reign more forcibly than in the world of amusement. To-day, thanks to energy, enterprise, taste, capital, an enormous London population, an ever-increasing floating population, and the universal shilling, we have the stupendous concrete exhibition known as Earl's Court. What was its origin? Who was its father? The London tea-garden.

Its aristocratic progenitors — Marylebone Gardens, Ranelagh, and Vauxhall, with the exception of the last place in its later and perhaps degenerate days—did not appeal to the 'swinish multitude.' They were choice resorts of the fashionable world, modelled, to a certain extent, on the pump-rooms of Tunbridge Wells and Bath; and their history is embalmed, if not written, in the letters and

memoirs of the last century. Richardson, Smollett, and Fielding touch upon them ; and the dramatists, as usual, follow the novelists. These choice resorts lived in an atmosphere of fine clothes, lace, scent, little affectations and deportment, before the distinction between the classes and the masses was swept away by the deluge of sans-culottism. The universal shilling was only then just peeping above the horizon.

Small as London was then, these places had their little suburban imitators, the imitators existing when the originals had gone out of fashion and into bricks-and-mortar. Marylebone Gardens (part of Devonshire Place) were the first to go, in 1778 ; Ranelagh (part of Grosvenor Road, Pimlico) followed about 1802, though remnants of its lath-and-plaster glories lingered about the neighbourhood for forty years afterwards ; and Vauxhall, adapting itself after a fashion to the new spirit of the age and the universal shilling, was not strangled by the speculative and all-devouring builder until the middle of the fifties, when Lord Cremorne's well-wooded and park-like estate at Chelsea had been turned into a successful pleasure-garden.

The most prominent imitations of the Ranelagh type were Bagnigge Wells, on the banks of the Fleet Ditch at Clerkenwell, on the north side of London, and Beulah Spa, at Norwood, on the south side. Both these places possessed springs and waters with alleged medicinal properties, which received some little aid from fresh air, and a good deal more from imagination. Long after Sadler's Wells had been turned from a 'well-house' into a local theatre, the northern copy, on a small scale, of Vauxhall, at Pentonville, known as White Conduit House, was a popular place of amusement, combining theatre, concert-room, and ball-room, in a small garden, with scenic temples and cheap classical statues, which became the prey of the watchful builder in 1849. On the eastern side of the mountain, lower down in the City Road, stood the Eagle Tavern and Pleasure Gardens, which, as described by Dickens in his 'Sketches by Boz' in the thirties, was a second or third-rate Vauxhall, suited to the moderate wants of the neighbourhood. The Eagle has a history which would fill a volume, and it exists to-day as a Salvation Army dépôt, bricked in by small houses.

Above this place, northwards, in Shepherdess Walk, on the road to Islington, was the Albert Saloon, a winter and summer theatre, standing in a garden that might have been copied from the open-air theatre in Prague, or some of the summer playhouses in Italy. The stage had two prosceniums, built at right angles to each other, one looking into the gardens, for fine weather, and the other looking into the saloon, for wet or cold weather. The gardens, of course, have been built upon, and the saloon is turned into a storehouse for the Britannia Theatre at Hoxton.

Across the Shepherd and Shepherdess Fields, through Lower Islington, following the winding line of the New River, you came to Canonbury Tavern, a place that occasionally indulged in garden fêtes and fireworks. Further on came Highbury Barn, a place for public dinners, dances, bean-feasts, and occasional entertainments. In its later days, before it was bought up and built upon, it became a theatre, music-hall, and garden—run as a kind of northern Cremorne, and not much beloved by its highly-respectable surroundings.

Following the curves of the New River, past

the Sluice House, you came to Hornsey Wood House, now the centre of Finsbury Park, a place more devoted to the sport of pigeon-shooting than to musical attractions. Turning eastward, at a corner of the Green Lanes—the favourite hunting-ground of those Cockney sportsmen, the creatures of Seymour the artist's imaginative sketches, which Mr. Edward Chapman's 'Young Man' (Charles Dickens) was employed to 'write up to'—you came to the Manor House, a favourite tavern term in those days, where, before Bank Holidays were invented, Easter and Whit Monday, at least, were always celebrated with music, fireworks, rope-dancers, and street-acrobats. Further eastward, you came to the Red Cow, at Dalston, a tea-garden and recognised place of entertainment, 'licensed pursuant to Act of Parliament of the Twenty-fifth of King George the Second.' Near here was a pleasure-garden, at Hackney Wick, close to what the multitude still call the Cat and Mutton Fields, which were only secured to the public after repeated and determined battles with squatters. At Mare Street, Hackney, was another Manor-House in a garden, which now exists as a

bricked-in concert-hall. At the extreme east-end of London were the Globe Gardens at Mile End, and the Garden Theatre, afterwards known as Lusby's, and now the site of the Grand Paragon Theatre.

On the Surrey side there was a Rosemary Branch, at Peckham, which copied the tea-garden glories of another Rosemary Branch, near the white-lead works at Hoxton, where a somewhat stagnant lake was held to be an attraction, like a similar lake at the Canonbury Tavern. The great feature, however, of the Surrey side was, for many years, the Surrey Zoological Gardens, at Walworth, where, in addition to a moderate display of animals, was a lake with a pasteboard presentment of the Castle of St. Angelo, at Rome, a promenade concert of some pretension, and a nightly display of fireworks, ornamental and explosive. Jullien, in the height of his well-deserved popularity, gave some gigantic concerts here, and the place was eventually taken by the late Frederick Strange, who developed it at the cost of a large fortune. The big concert-hall he erected still remains, but the gardens are bricks and mortar.

Apart from numerous tea-gardens situated in various parts of outlying London, having music and dancing licenses, and taverns, like the Monster at Pimlico and the Yorkshire Stingo in the New Road, Marylebone, which kept up, to the best of their knowledge and ability, what we may call the Vauxhall traditions, the multitude had three or four tolerated, if not licensed, annual orgies in the shape of metropolitan fairs, and one outside these limits, but within easy distance, at Greenwich. Bartholomew Fair at Smithfield has had several historians, and Greenwich Fair has not been neglected for want of descriptive writers; but Camberwell and Stepney have not been quite so fortunate. They were all much alike in their general features, Bartholomew Fair being the worst, because of its mixture with a rampant cattle-market. Those who remember these festivals of noise, dirt, drunkenness, and vulgarity, pitched, as at Camberwell, in the centre of a quiet, decorous, residential district, are right in believing that education and public decency have shown no greater advance than in the selection and conduct of public amusements. Much of this is un-

doubtedly traceable to the great Exhibition of 1851, and what it left in its train. It led up to the foundation of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, one of those institutions, peculiar to England, which benefit everybody but their own shareholders. It was probably started with a too lavish outlay of capital, and a too great belief in the attractive power of museums and object-lessons. Much of the money sunk in the form of practical education—in bringing facsimile reproductions of the great monuments and features of the world almost to the Cockney doorstep—is lost for ever ; but no one can say that during the last forty years or more it may not have produced effects that almost justify the outlay. Observant cynics in 1853 foretold the advent of Brock and Blondin and the predominance of the refreshment contractor ; but it was safe and common-sense prophecy. Bread and games have always been a necessity with the multitude. Human nature is the same in all ages and all countries. That alone is stationary. The world moves onward. What is looked upon as impossible or impracticable to-day is accepted as a matter of course to-morrow. It may not be long before the South

Kensington Museum—admirable in every respect—adds music to its many attractions. It may not be long before a café and a music-garden are conceded in Hyde Park, and London is brought up to the level of Vienna.

MY IDEAL FLAT

IN the beginning, or very near the beginning, an Englishman's house was his castle. He lived within sturdy stone walls; his street-door was a drawbridge; his latchkey was a bugle-horn; his protection was a ditch, politely called a moat, but in reality a sewer; his notice to quit was a siege. If he was strong enough, he defied the writ of ejectment; if not, he had a fight for his money, and succumbed to battle-axes, stones, catapults, and bows and arrows.

In the fulness of time population increased, oozed out of the castle, and struck root, after a fashion, in the plains. Caves and camps came first; huts followed; and these by slow yet certain evolution became gabled houses. The city was created, surrounded by walls. These walls were fortified. The ditch of the castle

was imitated on a larger scale. The streets inside the city were necessarily narrow, and the houses as close together as they are in Seville. You could shake hands with your opposite neighbour across the footway. In Seville the street plan was governed by an aggressive sun ; in the medieval city it was governed by the law of self-preservation. Our ancestors were not fools. They were as fond of light, air, and broad thoroughfares as their descendants, but they lived in the 'good old times,' and these commonplace luxuries were denied them. There was no gas, and the drawbridges were closed at dusk. Once within the walls, they drank their mead and sack, and enjoyed themselves. If they went to bed early, it was because they rose early, not because the Witenagemote willed it. Now, many centuries later, our tavern—the gin-shop in the Seven Dials, and the restaurant in Piccadilly—closes at half-past twelve, and we are (theoretically) sent to bed by Act of Parliament.

In the fulness of time the open town sprang from the loins of the fortified city. God made the country and man made the town. (See copy-book maxims.) The devil seized them

both. In the country, close to the town, he built semi-detached villas; in the town he invented the street. Yes, the street; the London street! The best graphic description of it is Yvette Guilbert's—'a box of dominoes set on end.' Prose fails me to describe it. I must drop into poetry, with the kind permission of John Keats:

'A thing of horror is a curse for ever;
Its ugliness increases; it will never
Light up our dull existence, but will keep
A heavy nightmare for us while we sleep.'

People exist in streets, as they do in diving-bells and condemned cells. It is not life.

As towns increased in size the market-place disappeared, and the shopkeeper was invented. From that moment the castle theory of the house became dead—as dead as a door-nail or a red-herring. The shopkeeper, in time, chiefly owing to his folly and short-sighted rapacity, encouraged the growth of a destructive monster called the 'Stores,' as the street encouraged the growth of another destructive monster called the 'residential mansion.' These four powers are still fighting against each other, and at the moment it is as difficult

to say which is the St. George and which is the Dragon as it is to say which side will ultimately be entitled to crow as victor.

The residential mansion began in the humble form of a so-called 'model' lodging-house. It was 'tried on the dog' first, and, of course, at the East End of London—the favourite dissecting theatre for experiments. It had many faults. It pulled down slum property, the defective homes of weavers and costers, and raised on the site a mansion or barrack aspiring to the skies, to house the working classes. The weaver and the coster were put to the door. No shuttle was allowed in the rooms and no barrow in the yard—the courtyard, far too courtly. The weaver and the coster were like Adam and Eve in one case and the Peri in another. Their places were taken by clerks and warehousemen from Wood Green and Tottenham. The early 'model' lodging-house was cemented with 'good intentions.' It might have been built by the Pandemonium Paving Company, Limited.

What was being done for the submerged tenth was soon imitated for the Upper Ten—

literally the Upper Ten. The 'cloud-capped' garret soon became as common as penny buses. One triumph was erected at Westminster, a building of thirteen stories, apparently supported by a squat arch, which looked like the mouth of a railway tunnel supporting a perpendicular town. Examining these 'beanstalk' mansions more closely, the most unobservant 'Jack' must have been struck—and unpleasantly struck, if he had ever 'done time'—by one unæsthetic and prominent feature: he was looking at a house of correction standing on end.

I have lived much in flats and 'upper parts'—on high levels for light and air, and in central neighbourhoods for convenience. London is sixteen miles long and eight miles broad, and the wear and tear, to say nothing of the expense of distances, is considerable.

I know flat-land thoroughly, both French and English. I have had a sky-floor in Paris, have lived in a London 'model' lodging-house, and have rented one of Lord Rowton's 'cubicles.' I have my ideal in flats. I like a set thoroughly self-contained, where I can come and go perfectly unheeded by man, woman, child, cat, dog,

or house-porter—above all, the house-porter. My objection to cat and dog is humanitarian. Flats may do for men with immortal souls, but they are no places for animals. When my time comes—the happy time that will come to all of us—I can toil up the stairs of my ideal flat for the last time uncontaminated by lifts, and die peaceably in my bed, without fuss or leave-taking. Even my death will remain a secret until the landlord calls for his rent, and finds that his solitary tenant has gone still higher in the world, leaving the quarter's rent in a bit of paper on the dressing-table.

IDEAL HOUSES

WANDERING one morning into the Lowther Arcade, I found myself behind an old man and a little girl. The man was very feeble and tottering in his steps, and the child was very young. It was near the Christmas season, and many children, richly dressed, in the care of mothers, sisters, and nursery-governesses, were loading themselves with all kinds of amusing and expensive toys. The vaulted roof re-echoed with the sounds of young voices, shrill whistles, wiry tinklings of musical go-carts, the rustling of paper, and the notes of cornopeans or pianos. It was the Exhibition of 1851 repeated in miniature, the toys of manhood being exchanged for the toys of youth.

My old man and my little girl were not amongst the happy buyers or the richly dressed, for they were evidently very poor. They had

wandered into the bazaar to feast upon its sights, and it was difficult to say which was the more entranced of the two. The old man gazed about him with a vacant, gratified smile upon his face, and the child was too young to know that any barrier existed to prevent her plucking the tempting fruit which she saw hanging in clusters on every side. This barrier—the old, thick, black, impassable barrier of poverty—though invisible to the child, was not invisible to me, and I blamed the old man for turning her steps into such a glittering, enchanted cavern, whose walls were really lined, to her, with bitterness and despair.

‘Why don’t we live here, gran’da?’ asked the child.

The old man gave no other answer than a weak laugh.

‘Why don’t I have a house like that?’ continued the child, pointing to a bright doll’s-house displayed upon a stall, and trying to drag her guardian towards it.

The old man still only laughed feebly as he shuffled past the attraction; and before the thought had struck me that I might have purchased a cheap pleasure by giving this

house to the child, they were both lost in the pushing, laughing crowd.

This incident naturally set me thinking about toys, and their effect in increasing the amount of human happiness. I asked myself if I, —, a respectable, middle-aged man of moderate means, was free from the influence of these powerful trifles. I was compelled, in all the cheap honesty of self-examination, to answer 'No.' I felt, upon reflection, that I was even weaker than the poor child I had just seen. The chief toy that I was seeking for was an ideal house that I had never been able to find. I was led away by a vague sentiment about the poetry of neighbourhoods—a secret consuming passion for red-brick—a something that could hardly be weighed or spanned; the echo of an old song; the mists of a picture; the shadow of a dream. She was led away by no such unsubstantial phantoms. Her eyes had suddenly rested for a few moments upon her childish paradise, and a few shillings would have made her happy. I, on the contrary, had exhausted years in searching for my paradise, but without a prospect of success.

The fact is, I have got an unfortunate habit

of looking back. I am fond of the past, though only in a dreamy, unsystematic way. My history is a little out of order, and I am no authority upon dates, but I like to hover about places. I cannot tell the day, the hour, or even the year, in which the Battle of Sedgemoor occurred ; but I have gloated over the old roadside mill from which the Duke of Monmouth watched his losing contest, and the old houses at Bridgewater, whose roofs were then probably crowded with women and children. I have even been through the straggling village of Weston Zoyland, and into the sanded tavern where the late Lord Macaulay resided for weeks while he wrote this portion of his history. I have heard the landlord's proud account of his distinguished guest, and how 'he worried about the neighbourhood.' This interesting fact, so I am informed, is duly recorded, upon my authority, in the latest edition of 'Men of the Time.' My only objection to the late Lord Macaulay is that he was one of these men of the time—of my own time. If Gibbon had been the careful historian of Sedgemoor, the village pot-house would have had a finer old crusted flavour to my taste. The sentiment that governs me

scarcely blooms under a hundred years, neither more nor less. I cannot learn to love the Elizabethan times; they are too remote. I have no more real sympathy with 1550 than with 1850. I can tolerate the seventeenth century; but the eighteenth always 'stirs my heart like a trumpet.'

Notwithstanding all this, I am not an obstructive man; I am not a fogey. I take the good the gods provide me. I have no prejudices against gas, though I wish it could be supplied without so much parochial quarrelling. It may generate poison, as certain chemists assert; but it certainly generates too many pamphlets and public meetings. I use the electric telegraph; I travel by the railway; and I am thankful to their inventors and originators. The moment, however, I leave the railway I plunge rapidly into the past. I never linger for a moment at the bright, new, damp, lofty railway-hotel (I hate the name of hotel, although I know it springs from hostelry), nor amongst the mushroom houses that rally round the station. My course is always through the distant trees, beyond the dwarfish, crumbling church, whose broad, low windows seem to have

taken root amongst the flat, uneven tombstones, into the old town or village, into its very heart—its market-place—and up to the brown old door of its oldest inn. I know everything that can be said against such places. They are very yellow ; they have too strong a flavour of stale tobacco-smoke ; their roofs are low, and their floors have a leaning either to one side or the other. Their passages are dark, and often built on various levels, so that you may tumble down into your bed-chamber, or tumble up into your sitting-room, shaking every tooth in your head or possibly biting your tongue. These may be serious drawbacks to some people, but they are not so serious to me, and I am able to find many compensating advantages. The last vestige of the real old able-bodied port lingers only in such nooks and corners, and is served out by matronly servants, like housekeepers in ancient families. I know one inn of the kind where the very 'boots' looks positively venerable. He wears a velvet skull-cap that Cardinal Wolsey might have been proud of ; he has saved ten thousand pounds in his humble servitude, and is a large landed proprietor in the county. Prosperity has not made him inattentive. No

one will give your shoes such an enduring polish, or call you up for an early train with such unerring punctuality.

With these sentiments, fancies, and prejudices in favour of the past, joined to a fastidious, quaintly luxurious taste and limited funds, it is hardly to be wondered at that I have searched long and vainly for my ideal dwelling. I might, perhaps, have found it readily enough in the country, but my habits only allowed me to seek it in town. I am a London man, London born and London bred—a genuine Cockney, I hope, of the school of Dr. Johnson and Charles Lamb. I cannot tear myself away from old taverns, old courts and alleys, old suburbs (now standing in the very centre of the town), old print-shops, old mansions, old archways, and old churches. I must hear the London chimes at midnight or life would not be worth a jot. I hear them, as they were heard a century and more ago, for they are the last things to change; but forty or fifty years have played sad havoc with land and brick and stone. Fire has done something; metropolitan improvements have done more. Not only do I mourn over what is lost, but what is gained. The town grows newer

every day that it grows older. I know it must be so—I know it ought to be so; I know it is a sign of increased prosperity and strength. I see this with one half of my mind, while I abhor it with the other. I cannot love New Oxford Street while St. Giles's Church and old Holborn still remain. I have no affection for Bayswater and Notting Hill, but a tender remembrance of Tyburn Gate. I feel no sensation of delight when I hear the name of St. John's Wood or the Regent's Park; and Camden Town is a thing of yesterday that I treat with utter contempt. If I allow my footsteps to wander along Piccadilly and through Knightsbridge, they turn down, on one side, into Chelsea, or up, on the other side, into Kensington, leaving Brompton unvisited in the middle. I am never tired of sitting under the trees in Cheyne Walk, of walking round the red bricks and trim gravel pathways of Chelsea Hospital, of peeping through the railings at Gough House, or watching the old Physic Garden from a boat on the river. I am never weary of roaming hand-in-hand with an amiable, gossiping companion, like Leigh Hunt, listening to stories at every doorstep in the old town, and repeopleing

faded, half-deserted streets with the great and little celebrities of the past. I never consider a day ill spent that has ended in plucking daisies upon Kew Green, or in wasting an hour or two in the cathedral stillness of Charter House Square. I am fond of tracing resemblances, perhaps imaginary, between Mark Lane and Old Highgate, and of visiting old merchants' decayed mansions far away in tarry Poplar. I could add a chapter to Leigh Hunt's pleasant essay upon City trees,* and tell of many fountains and flower-gardens that stand under the windows of dusky counting-houses.

Humanizing as such harmless wandering ought to be, it seems only to make me break a commandment. I am sorely afraid that I covet my neighbour's house. When I find the nearest approach to my ideal, my daydream, my toy dwelling, it is always in the occupation of steady, unshifting people. Such habitations in or near London seem to descend as heir-looms from generation to generation. They are never to be let; they are seldom offered for sale; and the house-agent, the showman of

* 'The Town: its Memorable Characters and Events.'

'eligible villas,' is not familiar with them. I will describe the rarity.

It must be built of red brick, not earlier than 1650, not later than 1750, picked out at the edges with slabs of yellow stone. It must not be too lofty, and must be equally balanced on each side of its doorway. It must stand detached, walled in on about an acre of ground, well surrounded by large old trees. Its roof must be sloping; and if crowned with a bell-turret, so much the better. Its outer entrance must be a lofty gate of flowered ironwork, supported on each side by purple-red brick columns, each one surmounted by a globe of stone. Looking through the tracery of this iron gate, you must see a few broad white steps leading up to the entrance-hall. The doorway of this hall must be dark and massive, the lower half wood and the upper half window-framed glass. Over the top must be a projecting hood-porch filled with nests of wood-carving, representing fruit, flowers, and figures, brown with age. Looking through the glass of the hall-door, you must see more carving like this along the lofty walls; and a broad staircase, with banisters dark as ebony, leading up to a

long narrow window, shaded by the rich wings of a spreading cedar-tree.

The rooms of this mansion will necessarily be in keeping with its external features, presenting many unexpected, irregular closets and corners, with perhaps a mysterious double staircase leading down to the cellars, to which a romantic, unauthenticated story is attached. Such houses are none the worse for being filled with legends, for having one apartment, at least, with a reputed murder-stain upon its floor, and for being generally alluded to as Queen Elizabeth's palaces, although probably not built for nearly a century after that strong-minded monarch's death.

The window-shutters are none the worse for being studded with alarm-bells as thick as grapes upon a fruitful vine, as an additional comfort is derived from the security of the present when we are made to reflect upon the dangers of the past. A few rooks will give an additional charm to the place; and it will be pleasant, when a few crumbs are thrown upon the gravel, to see a fluttering cloud of sparrows dropping down from the sheltering eaves.

With regard to the neighbourhood in which

such a house should stand, it must be essentially *ripe*. Better that it should be a little faded, a little deserted, a little unpopular, and very unfashionable, than so dreadfully raw and new. It should have a flavour of old literature, old politics, and old art. If it is just a little obstructive and High Tory—inclined to stand upon the ancient ways—no sensible man of progress should blame it, but smile blandly and pass on. It will, at least, possess the merit, in his eyes, of being self-supporting ; asking for or obtaining no Government aid. While Boards of Works are freely supplied with funds to construct the new, there is no board but unorganized sentiment to maintain the old.

This house and this neighbourhood should not be far from London—from the old centre of the old town. They should stand in Soho, or in Lincoln's Inn Fields ; or in Westminster, like Queen's Square, near St. James's Park ; or even in Lambeth, like the Archbishop's palace ; better still if in the Strand, like Northumberland House ; or in Fleet Street, like the Temple Gardens.

What luxury would there be, almost equal to

anything we read of in the 'Arabian Nights,' in turning on one side from the busy crowd, unlocking a dingy door that promised to lead to nothing but a miserable court, and passing at once into a secret, secluded garden! What pleasures would be equal to those of hearing the splash of cool fountains, the sighing of the wind through lofty elms and broad beeches, of standing amongst the scent and colours of a hundred growing flowers, of sitting in an oaken room with a tiled fireplace, surrounded by old china in cabinets, old folios upon carved tables, old portraits of men and women in the costume of a bygone time, and looking out over a lawn of grass into a winding vista of trees, so contrived as to shut out all signs of city life, while the mellow hum of traffic came in at the open window, or through the walls, and you felt that you were within a stone's-throw of Temple Bar!

In such a house, on such a spot, a man might live, and his life be something more than a weary round of food and sleep. His nature would become subdued to what it rested in; the clay would happily take the shape of the mould. I believe more in the influence of

dwellings upon human character than in the influence of authority on matters of opinion. The man may seek the house, or the house may form the man; but in either case the result is the same. A few yards of earth, even on this side of the grave, will make all the difference between life and death.

If our dear old friend Charles Lamb were now alive (and we all must wish he were, if only that he might see how every day is bringing him nearer the crown that belongs only to the Prince of British Essayists), there would be something singularly jarring to the human nerves in finding him at Dalston, but not so jarring in finding him a little farther off, at Hackney. He would still have drawn nourishment in the Temple and in Covent Garden; but he must surely have perished if transplanted to New Tyburnia. I cannot imagine him living at Pentonville (I cannot, in my uninquiring ignorance, imagine who Penton was that he should name a *ville* !), but I can see a certain appropriate oddity in his cottage at Colebrook Row, Islington.

In the first place, we may agree that this London suburb is very old, without going into

the vexed question of whether it was really very 'merry.' In the second place, this same Colebrook Row was built a few years before our dear old friend was born—I believe in 1770. In the third place, it was called a 'row,' though 'lane' or 'walk' would have been as old and as good; but 'terrace' or 'crescent' would have rendered it unbearable. The New River flowed calmly past the cottage walls—as poor George Dyer found to his cost—bringing with it fair memories of Izaak Walton and the last two centuries.

The house itself had also certain peculiarities to recommend it. The door was so constructed that it opened into the chief sitting-room; and this, though promising much annoyance, was really a source of fun and enjoyment to our dear old friend. He was never so delighted as when he stood on the hearthrug receiving many congenial visitors, as they came to him on the muddiest-boot and the wettest-of-umbrella days.

His immediate neighbourhood was also peculiar. It was there that weary wanderers came to seek the waters of oblivion. Suicide could pitch upon no spot so favourable for its

sacrifices as the gateway leading into the river enclosure before Charles Lamb's cottage. Waterloo Bridge had not long been built, and was not then a fashionable theatre for self-destruction. The drags were always kept ready in Colebrook Row, and are still so kept at a small tavern a few doors from the cottage. The landlord's ear, according to his own account, had become so sensitive by repeated practice, that when aroused at night by a heavy splash in the water, he could tell by the sound whether it was an accident or a wilful plunge. He never believed that poor George Dyer tumbled in from carelessness, though it was no business of his to express an opinion on the matter. After the eighth suicide within a short period Charles Lamb began to grow restless.

'Mary,' he said to his sister, 'I think it's high time we left this place;' and so they went to Edmonton. Those who are painfully familiar with the unfortunate mental infirmity under which they both laboured will see a sorrowful meaning in words like these. Those who, like me, can see an odd harmony between our dear old friend and Colebrook Row, will lament the

sad necessity which compelled them to part company.

Without wishing for a moment to erect my eccentric taste in houses as an unerring guide for my fellow-creatures (especially as the ancient London dwellings are growing fewer every day, and I am still seeking my ideal toy), I must still be allowed to wonder at that condition of mind which can settle down, with seeming delight, in the new raw buildings that I see springing up on every side. I am not speaking of those who are compelled to practise economy (I am compelled to practise it myself), nor of those whose business arrangements require them to keep within a particular circle; but of those who have the power, to a certain extent, of choosing their ground, and choose it upon some principle that I am unable to understand.

I have a sensitive horror of regularity, of uniformity, of straight lines, of obtrusive geometrical forms. I prefer a winding alley to a direct street. I detest a modern, well-advertised building-estate. The water-colour sketch of such a place is meant to be very fascinating and attractive as it hangs in the great house-agent's office or window, but it has

no charms for me. My theory is that a man must be perpetually struggling if he wishes to preserve his individuality in such a settlement.

The water may be pure ; the soil may be gravelly ; the neighbourhood may be well supplied with all kinds of churches and chapels ; the ' red-book ' may not pass it by as being out of the fashionable circle ; blue-books may refer to it approvingly as a model of perfect drainage ; it may be warmed up by thorough occupation ; perambulators may be seen in its bare new squares ; broughams may stand by the side of its bright level kerbstones ; but the demon of sameness, in my eyes, would always be brooding over it. I should feel that when I retired to rest perhaps eight hundred masters of households were slumbering in eight hundred bed-chambers exactly the same size and the same shape as my own. When I took a bath, or lingered over the breakfast-table, I should be haunted by the knowledge that eight hundred people might probably be taking similar baths and similar breakfasts in precisely similar apartments. My library, my dining-room, and my drawing-room would correspond in shape and

size with eight hundred other receptacles devoted to study, refreshment, and recreation.

If I gazed from a window or stood at a doorway I should see hundreds of other windows and hundreds of other doorways that matched mine in relative position and design. I should look down upon the same infant shrubs and the same even, level walls, or up at the same long, level parapets, without break, the same regular army of chimney-pots, without variety, until I should feel as if I had settled in a fashionable penitentiary, to feed upon monotony for the rest of my days. My dreams at night would probably be a mixture of the past and the present, of my old tastes and my new sufferings. The builder, whose trowel seemed ever ringing in my ears, would dance over me in hoops and patches; and the whitewasher, whose brush seemed always flopping above my head, would be mixing his composition in my favourite punch-bowl. My old books, my old prints, my old china, my old furniture, my old servants, would pine away in such a habitation, and I should have to surround myself with fresh faces and fresh voices, according to the latest model. Finally, I should die of a surfeit

of stucco, and be the first lodger entered in the records of the adjoining bleak, unfinished cemetery.

If I have little sympathy with those people who dwell in such tents as these—who neither belong to the town nor the country, who hang upon the skirts of London in mushroom suburbs that blend as inharmoniously with the great old city as a Wandsworth villa would blend with Rochester Castle—I am totally unable to understand the character of those other people whose love for the modern carries them even farther than this, and who take a pride in planting damp and comfortless homes in the very centre of wild, unfinished neighbourhoods. Who are they? Have they human form and shape, with minds and hearts, or are they, as I have often suspected, merely window-blinds? If they are not policemen and laundresses in charge of bare walls and echoing passages; if they are not hired housekeepers put in to bait the trap, and catch unwary tenants; if they are not restless spirits, who, for an abatement of rent, are always willing to lead the advanced posts in suburban colonization—whence springs that singular ambition which is always anxious to be literally

first in the field, and the oldest inhabitant in a settlement of yesterday ?

Surely there can be little pleasure in living for months amongst heaps of brick-dust, shavings, mortar, and wet clay ; in staring at hollow shops that are boarded up for years until they are wanted, and at undecided mansions, which may turn out to be public-houses ; or in being stared at, in a tenfold degree, by rows of spectral carcasses and yawning cellars ? There can be little pleasure in contemplating cold stucco porticos of a mongrel Greek type, that crack and fall to pieces in rain and frost ; or gaping gravel-pits ; or stagnant ponds ; or lines of oven-like foundations waiting for more capital and more enterprise to cover them with houses. There can be just as little pleasure in seeing your scanty pavement breaking suddenly off before your door, and your muddy, hilly road tapering away in a few rotten planks that lead into a marshy, grassless field, where you may stand and easily fancy yourself the last man at the end of a melancholy, unsuccessful, deserted world, looking into space, with no one person or thing behind you.

The old places that I shall always cling to

IDEAL HOUSES.

are unhappily often visited by decay ; but it is the decay of ripe old age, which is always venerable. My ideal toy-house—the nearest approach to it that I can find—may become uninhabitable in the fulness of years, but it will still be picturesque ; and those who may despise it as a dwelling will admire it upon canvas. In this form it is often brought within my humble reach, and I secure the shadow if I cannot obtain the substance. I still, however, look longingly at the reality, as my little girl looked at her toy-house in her morning's walk ; and, like her, I shall doubtless be swept past it, still looking back, until I am sucked into that countless crowd from which there is no returning.

NEIGHBOURS

THERE is one word in the English language which Englishmen are particularly proud of, and that is 'home.' Their pride in this word, and all it represents, is fostered by travelling, by observation, more or less hurried, or more or less prejudiced, of foreign manners, and even by foreigners themselves. It was only the other day, at a political lecture delivered in the middle of a morning concert by an Italian countess, that I was called upon to listen to the following words :

“ Home,” parole intraduisible ; parce qu'elle renferme en elle tout ce qu'il y a de bon, de doux, et de tendre dans l'existence ; parce qu'elle est le poème de toute une vie. . . .’

It is not for me to question such sentiments as these, or to wonder at the love my countrymen bear to this word. I have stated my

opinions in this magazine with regard to dwellings,* and no man who is as fastidious as I am in his taste for houses can laugh at those who call home 'the poem of a life.' Although many houses are well filled with fathers, mothers, and children without being worthy the name of homes, it is certain that houses, especially in England, must form the groundwork of such 'poems.' A feeling of this still prompts me to linger about these shells of humanity, and examine a few unnoticed disturbing elements to which they may possibly be subjected.

The house—the home—is entirely at the mercy of 'next door,' or 'over the way,' in spite of any Nuisances Removal Bill and its attendant inspectors. The law is very powerful, or, if not powerful, is very meddling; but a certain democratic constitutional freedom of action is much stronger. An Englishman's house is his castle by custom, usage, and right, and he may do a great deal with his castle before he is checked by the law.

There is the miser, or that eccentric, sometimes mad, sometimes obstinate, sometimes

* 'Ideal Houses,' *Cornhill Magazine*, No. 4, April, 1860.

single-minded individual whom we call a 'miser,' for want of a better title. Has anybody ever calculated what he may do in blighting a neighbourhood ?

Walk about London, from east to west, from north to south ; go into those suburban districts attached to the Metropolis, which are little towns in themselves, and take note of all the scarecrow dwellings you may see about you. There are plenty to look at. Some of these belong to misers, others to madmen, and some are in the hands of Chancery. The law, instead of protecting property—and particularly that most delicate class of property, investments in houses—is one of its chief destroyers. One house in Chancery in a single row, terrace, or square not only 'eats its own head off,' but nibbles at its neighbours.

We will take Skinner Street, Snow Hill, in the City of London, and ask if that clump of houses standing on the right-hand side as you descend towards Holborn is an improvement to the neighbourhood or a credit to a practical country ? I think I can remember them for twenty years past, the same closed, dusty, spectral shops they are at present ; the dead

leaves of the street, the withered branches of the parish. Their black and blistered fronts are the prey of the bill-stickers ; and their dark windows have been beaten into ragged holes by the youths of Sharp's Alley.

All houses of this kind, no matter where they may be situated, from stagnant Homerton to riotous Westminster, are thus kicked and ill-treated. It seems that the rising generation delight in striking them precisely because they appear to have no friends. Youth is naturally cruel, and only grows humane as it grows older ; but old as it may grow, it never learns to love such hollow spectres.

With what sentiments the living, breathing traders in the immediate neighbourhood regard these eyesores, I have no means of judging, but I should say they were far from friendly. Who the proprietor of the dead but not buried houses, may be, and what is the cause of their death, are things not within my knowledge. An Englishman's house is his castle. Why am I not satisfied ?

Does anyone ever go to Stratford, near Bow, by the coach-road, and fail to notice a row of houses on the left-hand side, just before enter-

ing the village? I call them the Phantom Terrace. They were built, some years ago, for small family residences, in the approved terrace style—eighteen or twenty houses in a line, with areas in front—the first and last being the largest.

The story runs that they belong to two brothers, who have not spoken to each other for half a century. One brother is said to live at one corner, where there is certainly some slight signs of life, and the other brother is supposed to live at the other corner. If he does live there, it must be in one of the back-kitchens. The popular belief in the neighbourhood is that they watch each other like two dogs at each end of a bone, and neither will lose sight of his withered property, for fear it should be stolen by the other.

They appear to have an equal distrust of tenants, for all the terrace is unoccupied, and no bill or notice invites an offer from daring and speculative house-seekers. The windows, as usual, are black and broken ; the areas, when I saw them last, were without rails, being nothing but open, gaping pits ; the doors were cut off from all communication with the fore-

courts for want of steps, except in one instance, where a plank was placed across the chasm ; the once-painted timber was baked into a blue-white colour by the sun ; and altogether they presented a very desolate, hopeless picture.

I feel no delicacy in thus alluding to these houses ; for property of this kind, while it enjoys its private rights, is not released from many public duties. The parish has a complaint against such phantom terraces, because they occupy land and yet contribute little to the local taxes. Eccentricity is doubtless a very fine thing—it sometimes gives us genius, and genius gives us poems, statues, and pictures—but it is not to be patted on the back when it plays its antics with houses. Passers-by can afford to smile at this phantom terrace, but not so the fixed inhabitants of ‘Stratford atte Bowe.’ Whoever may be its owner, and whatever may be the cause which has brought it to its present state, to them it is a blight, a legalized nuisance.

Go from the far east of London to the west, and you will still find these street-cancers, even within the shadow of Buckingham Palace.

In James’s Street, Westminster — so I think it is called—there is the fragment of a

house-ruin clinging to a mansion. You may peep through the lopsided, closed shutters or the crevices of the battered door and see the broken outline of a small room, containing a heap of crumbled bricks. It is not difficult to fancy some bony figure sitting in dusty rags upon this mound, gnawing its fingers with hunger, and staring at you with glassy eyes through locks of matted hair. The place looks like a ground-down, jagged, decayed tooth at the end of a comely row, and must be anything but agreeable as a next-door neighbour.

Who is the owner of such an unfruitful plant? Was it a freeholder without kith or kin, who went out one day some years ago, when life and property were not so secure as they are now, who never came back, and whose dwelling, long since stripped bare, is left to rot slowly away? Is it a woman in a close-fitting dress with a short waist and a cowl-shaped bonnet, who visits the ruin timidly every now and then, who rubs her hands when she finds it still safe, and in the same place, and then trips along the street in a kind of joyous dance?

I remember one phantom dwelling like this that stood in the middle of a suburban street

(like Middle Row, in Holborn), the whole front of which, for some reason, was taken away, so that the rooms were exposed like the interior of an open doll's-house. There was no furniture in them worth speaking of, and the tenant was said to be an unconvicted murderer. Anyhow the house had a tenant—a rough, unshaven man, who kept his coals in a corner of the first-floor room facing the street, and, in company with other boys, I used to wait for his appearance when he came out through an inner door to fetch a shovelful, as if he had been a figure over a toy-clock.

I remember another house in the possession of an unruly tenant, who would neither pay rent nor give up the premises. The law of ejectment must have been in a very rude state at that time, or there must have been some peculiar features in this case, for I recollect the house being pulled down, tile by tile, plank by plank, brick by brick, like a house of cards, the greatest care being taken not to injure the family, who squatted on the foundation until the last nail was removed.

I know a very pleasant village in Wiltshire which has been fatally injured by an undoubted

miser. This man was an obstinate farmer, whose greed was for exceptionally high prices, and he piled up wheat-ricks, which he kept untouched for twenty years, until they were one living mass of rats. The whole place is now half eaten up by these vermin, who run up the cottage walls by daylight and leap at birds as they fly over the village.

If anyone doubts the inconvenience of having a miser—so-called—for a neighbour, let him read the lives of John Elwes and Daniel Dancer. The former had various residences, and kept them all in such a state that they were nuisances to those who lived near them; and the latter, by living always at Harrow Weald Common, only showed us what he would have done if his lot had been cast in London.

The Baron d'Aguilar, another 'eccentric,' as they are amiably called, must have been another disturber of many homes and houses. His chief freaks were performed at Islington, about the end of the last century, at a place which is now known in eccentric history as the 'Starvation Farm.' He had several houses, shut up and crammed with rich furniture, at different parts

of the town, but he reserved his most obtrusive singularities for his farmyard. He suffered nearly the whole of his live-stock to languish and die by inches for want of provender, and sometimes they were seen devouring each other. His hogs were often observed gobbling up the lean fowls, while the 'baron' walked about the wretched premises besmeared with all kinds of filth.* The miserable situation of the poor animals would often rouse the indignation of the neighbours, who assembled in crowds to hoot and pelt the baron. On these occasions he never took any notice of the incensed mob, but always seized the first opportunity of quietly making his escape. He was once threatened with a prosecution by the New River Company for throwing a skeleton of one of his cattle into the stream.† Truly, Camden Street, Islington, must have been an unpleasant dwelling-place about 1780 or 1790!

I can fancy many other blights to neighbourhoods, many other unpleasant neighbours, besides misers. The 'poem of a life' is so delicate, so easily disturbed and shaken to its

* Granger's 'Wonderful Museum,' 1802, 8vo.

† Nelson's 'History of Islington.'

very roots, that it lies at the mercy of a thing as impalpable as an echo. Woe upon the steady, domestic member of society who has taken his lease, has made his alterations, and has pitched his tent, as he supposes, for life, if some peculiar combination of bricks and mortar should give his settlement an echo. A smoky chimney is not easily cured ; but an echo is far more difficult to deal with.

The power of reverberating sound is very amusing and agreeable when confined to lakes and mountain passes, and it may even be productive of profit to those who trade upon the curiosity of tourists. Beyond this sphere of action it is a peculiar nuisance—a nuisance that is latent only for the short period it generally remains undiscovered, and which may be called into annoying activity at any moment by a child.

A talking parrot (another home nuisance) which has learnt improper language on its homeward voyage, and which is hung up at the open window of a next-door dining-room, is not half as bad as an ‘interesting echo.’ I knew an echo of this kind near a town in Kent which was called ‘interesting’ by scientific writers, but which was not at all interesting to

those who lived near it. This echo, produced by the position of certain farm-buildings, was triple in its reverberating effects, and, night or day, was seldom without a crowd of admirers. The town was a popular watering-place not far from London, and young bucks who missed the packet-boat used never to miss the echo. It kept them out of bed until very early hours in the morning, on which occasions the neighbourhood of the farm-buildings was disturbed by jocular phrases and inquiries. The local constable was powerless as a prevention, for the echo could be tested from a considerable distance and from many different points, so that it was impossible to fix anyone as the mover of the nuisance.

The farmer's life, particularly, was rendered unbearable. Like Caliban, he lived surrounded by mysterious and insulting noises ; the bellowing of his cattle, the crowing of his fowls, was multiplied by three, without any benefit to his pocket ; his children grew up, and, as their voices strengthened, only added to his annoyance ; he dreaded to call a labourer across a meadow for fear of arousing his enemy ; and at last he acted like a sensible man, and turned his

back for ever upon such a dwelling. Fortunately for him he was not a freeholder, so he shifted without much loss ; but, for all that, the 'poem of a life' is not easily transplanted. Something is always left behind, if only old habits and old associations.

No matter how isolated we may endeavour to live, we are nearly always at the mercy of our next-door neighbours. Their quarrels, in many instances, become our quarrels, and their enemies our enemies.

I remember a row of fine old red-brick detached mansions, standing in one of the London suburbs, that were turned completely round because the owner of one of them had offended a landowner opposite. As they originally stood, their frontage looked on to a pleasant little meadow, well studded with trees. They were built about 1720, on the border of what was then a narrow country road, and the opposite prospect, though not secured, was regarded as an important addition to their value.

This prospect, or meadow, continued untouched for nearly a century, until a quarrel arose between the owner of the land and the owner of *one* of the mansions. One house-

holder raised the dispute, but the whole row suffered. In a few months the trees on the pleasant meadow were cut down to bare, unsightly posts, and the whole place was covered with small hut-like dwellings of the meanest kind. A number of sweeps, dustmen, coal-heavers, and brickmakers were soon induced to plant themselves in this settlement, and complete the landowner's revenge. The backs of the huts—to heap indignity upon indignity—were purposely turned towards the mansions, and there was nothing left for the mansions to do but to turn their backs upon the huts. Drawing-rooms were transformed into servants' bedrooms, and bedrooms into drawing-rooms, and the habits of half a century had to be altered in a day.

How many aged, conservative people received their death-blow in this revolution I am not able to state, but as life is entirely made up of what appear to be trifles, it is probable that many old inhabitants were grievously shaken by the change. To make matters worse, the prospect they were compelled to turn to was not an improvement on the last. They had to look across their gardens on one of those brickfield

deserts, where a town of little houses for persons 'employed in the City' was rapidly growing round a spiky, unfinished church. This attack upon the unfortunate mansions arose from nothing more than a dispute about taking the chair at a charity dinner, wherein the householder insulted the landowner, and obstinately refused to apologize.

To those whose lot it is to live in streets or places where the luxury of detached houses cannot be indulged in, the character and pursuits of next-door neighbours should be a fruitful source of anxiety. The practice of gathering together brings strength and security in some cases; in others it only brings risk and annoyance.

You may conduct your household with the most scrupulous care, you may never allow a lighted candle in any room without it is planted in a wire guard, and you may retire to rest with a perfect consciousness that everything of an inflammable character has been properly extinguished. All this prudence, however, may have been thrown away, because your neighbours are not as careful as you are. You may lie at the mercy of a boy on one side who is

fond of reading his light literature in bed, or of an old lady on the other side who forgets that a flaming gas-jet is not as harmless as a waterpipe. At the hour when you have usually sunk into total forgetfulness of the world you may be called upon to stand in a half-dreamy, half-clothed state in the middle of the puddly street, and see your favourite books and pictures pumped on to save them from the fire raging at your neighbour's.

How many of us have slept calmly over powder-mines without being aware of our danger ! How many a house has been secretly crammed with explosive fireworks, because to harbour such things is illegal ! And how many a man has been hurled against his own walls because his next-door neighbour was a smuggling pyrotechnist !

A man who takes root in a particular neighbourhood, and tries to stand above it—who lives at Rome and will not do as Rome does—has endless difficulties to contend with.

I know a district, in a once distinguished part of old London, which is now overrun by lodgers and lodging-letters. Most of the lodgers are poor foreign refugees, and here it was that

I once saw Felice Orsini throwing a cigar-end out of a second-floor window. In an old street of this district (built about 1680) I noticed, some eight years ago, painted on the street-door of a respectable-looking house, immediately under the knocker, the following laconic notice :

BROWN

NO LODGERS

Here was certainly an attempt to defend the 'poem of a life' from all foreign attacks in a single, vigorous line. It was a history in itself, far more expressive than many volumes. It told the passer-by the existing character of the neighbourhood. It spoke of many troublesome applications that had been made for shelter by weary travellers, while cabs, piled up with luggage, were waiting at the door. It spoke of many bewildering inquiries that had been made after people with strange names, who had either assassinated an unpopular King or had left a little account unsettled at a tailor's. It spoke of many mistaken knocks and rings, which had brought down a sulky maid-servant from a fourth floor (the houses run lofty in that neighbourhood), and had caused her to 'give

notice' to her master or her mistress. It spoke plainly enough to those who could understand English, but not so plainly to most foreigners. Mr. Fergusson, seeking for bed and board, was warned off the doorstep; but Monsieur Ferguson, and Herr Feurgeisonn, and Signor Fergusoni may still have pestered Brown. It showed, however, what kind of lodgers may blight a whole district, especially for those sturdy housekeepers who desire to live without them.

There is no fate more melancholy, in my opinion, than that of people who plant their homes in a neighbourhood which fades almost as soon as it is born. I know many such neighbourhoods in the outskirts of London, that started badly some thirty or forty years ago, and have now lost themselves beyond redemption.

The back-streets of small houses in a district like this seldom show much change, except in the decay brought on by bad building, rough usage, and a carelessness about repairs. The field, or market-garden, which formed their termination when they started may have been planned out in new streets a little broader, and with houses a little larger, or, it may be, filled

up with those most dreary objects, the black, can-shaped gas-holders of a gas-factory. A short street that is blocked up at one end with several of these dark storehouses of light is not a cheerful sight to look upon ; but even that is less depressing than the more ambitious parts of the district.

The weakest and most depressing part is generally a terrace, which is evidently a local misfit—a builder's mistake. It will possess size, and a hopelessly shabby air of pretence, and that will be all. Some few respectable householders will live in it, induced to do so, perhaps, by low rents, or business that ties them to the locality. These are the persons whose fate is to be commiserated, who will suffer by neighbours over whom they have no control.

The first sign of decay will be the sprouting out of a loan-office ; the next a parlour turned into the workroom of an artificial flower-maker, the next a front-garden converted into the timber-yard of a small pianoforte maker, and another garden half filled with samples of 'superfine' tombstones and the 'latest fashion' in monumental urns. Perhaps a gilded arm and mallet will be thrust out of the wall between two first-

floor windows, to show that gold-beating has obtained a footing on the terrace ; and before many months have passed the lower rooms and garden of the same house may be occupied by a cheap and obtrusive photographer. From this point an alacrity in sinking may be fully expected.

The photographer will get cheaper still, and more obtrusive ; his operations will spread from the house and garden to the public pathway, where he will stand with an inky specimen of his art, and stop the passers-by ; an adjoining house will put out a few shaky chairs, a washing-tub, a fender, and a four-post bedstead, and call itself a broker's ; another house will bud out boldly in the bird and dog fancying line ; and the largest house at the corner will be started as a ' Terpsichorean Hall,' where the Schottische, Gitani, Varsoviana, and Gorlitz dances, with German, Spanish, and French waltzing, and Parisian quadrilles, will be taught at sixpence a lesson. The terrace will be lucky if it gets through the winter season without falling into the hands of travelling showmen.

It was only the other day, as I passed a place of this description, which has sat to me as a

model, that I saw a rifle-gallery in full demand at a penny a shot, which was nothing more than a broad tube carried through an open window of a front parlour right across the apartment to a target in the yard beyond. I had known the house in better days, and I shuddered at such a desecration of the domestic hearth.

Few men are so rich and powerful that they can live in the Metropolis and yet surround themselves with such armour that they can afford to despise their neighbours. A neighbour is a man who will always make his presence felt through one or other of the senses. He may attack you through the ear, through the nose, or through the eye ; but attack you he assuredly will, and when you least expect it. The only comfort is that these attacks, these disturbers of home, are passed on, and while you are annoyed by one neighbour, you may probably be annoying another.

On one side of me is a man who is always altering his house, who has offended my taste by covering his red bricks with a coating of stucco, although the whole row in which we live was built in 1768. His scaffolding is even now before my window, and his bricklayer's

labourer is staring at me as I write, little thinking that I am handing him down to posterity. On the other side is a quiet neighbour who is often annoyed by my children and my piano.

Again, I have been shocked by the outside of a ducal residence in Cavendish Square, which seems to me to boast that penal style of architecture peculiar to houses of correction. The noble owner has doubtless, in his turn, been shocked by many house-monsters of plebeian taste; and so in the great clearing-house of the world such accounts are fairly balanced.

The English home is good; the French want of home is good; and neither country should be blamed for not being the same as the other. The home—the ‘poem of a life’—may have its pleasures; but it may also have its pains; and there is much philosophy in the French mode of living out of doors, and sleeping quite contentedly in the fraction of a dwelling

THE PAROCHIAL MIND

IF any one essence or thing requires a champion, it is surely that suffering, abused and despised entity the Parochial Mind. For far too many years has it been kicked and cuffed, and pelted with unsavoury eggs, and dragged through unpleasant mud-baths. For far too many years has it been the obvious accessible target of small wits, who have showered their little arrows about its devoted head. For far too many years have heavier humorists sat upon its body and done all that human intellect could do to flatten it into nothingness.

It still lives. They have called it Bumbleism and Little Pedlington ; but it still survives, for all that. Its fancy portrait has been sketched in many contemptible forms and painted with many gaudy colours ; but yet it grows apace, even as a pampered child. The favourite

images of the red-nosed beadle, and the fiery orator who deals in cabbage and shakes the vestry in his senatorial overtime, have been powerless to laugh it down. They are very amusing personifications, so far as they go, but the *reductio ad absurdum* process is too broad in its application to be otherwise than confined in its results. Because Socrates was henpecked, it does not follow that his philosophy was all wind ; nor was the greatness of Cromwell neutralized by that ridiculous wart upon his nose.

The loudest opponents of the Parochial Mind are usually men of the shortest memories. They forget that it was only the other day when England itself was nothing but a Little Pedlington. The despised parish of the present hour, in value, if not in extent, would put to shame that little Britain which William the First is immortalized for conquering. That other little Britain which turned round and beheaded its King was nothing to boast of in the shape of imports and exports ; and the unruly Parliament that the Protector defied had a marvellous resemblance to a modern vestry.

The great weakener of the present age seems to be an ignorant impatience of the Parochial Mind, and an equally ignorant passion for universality. It instils its poison at the very root of life : the most ordinary child at the most ordinary school is taught to spread his slender stock of memory and intellect over the widest possible area.

The doubtful chronologies of all creation are first of all crammed into his languid ear, and then 'wrung from him like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit.' He must know a little of everything—classics, up to a certain unsatisfactory point ; history, according to the vaguest authorities ; languages sufficient to write the Lord's prayer in three tongues, and forget all about the unmeaning exercise in less than three years afterwards. He is taken to task for not remembering what has probably had no authenticated existence, the so-called landmarks of universal history. He is led into disputes about the dates of events that possibly never occurred, and considered a marvel of successful teaching if his answers are given in a confident and unhesitating manner.

No one will charitably take him aside and whisper into his ear that little comes of real knowledge but increased modesty, doubt and suspicion. No one is either bold enough or honest enough to tell him how the great Past has wrapped itself in a dense fog, into which it is almost vain to attempt to penetrate. No one will point out to him the patient labour and incessant application required to let in the light even through one little loophole of this dark and silent barrier. No guide, philosopher, and friend will teach him these things ; and he will go into the world a noisy, superficial babbler. His mental condition is a fair average specimen of the broad, universal mind, as distinguished from that other mental condition which is sneeringly called the parochial.

As he grows up to man's estate, the heroes most likely to command his admiring worship will be the encyclopædical men — the anti-parochial speakers, thinkers, and actors. He will pass by the solid monuments of the parochial mind to run after the dazzling phantoms of Admirable Crichtonism. He will see his ideal of eminence only in those self-conscious, learned posturers who are pointed at

as having drained the cup of knowledge to the dregs, and as crying out aloud for it to be again filled. He will be prone to have faith in intuition, in royal roads to learning, in the power of untutored genius, in happy guessing, in the virtues of touch-and-go. He must exhaust a science before breakfast ; another science before dinner ; and a language in the intervals of a week's business. He will bestow his flying attention upon national and personal records, but only on the scale of about one inch to a century ; for it is a first necessity of the anti-parochial and universal mind that it should ' survey the world from China to Peru.' He will glance rapidly over all books that issue from the press, to keep up his easily-earned character as a well-informed man. To be convicted of not knowing, at least, the title of a work and the name of its author would be heartburn and mortification for many weeks.

As an authority upon taste, upon pictures, upon secret memoirs, the laws of colour, the real and the ideal, the finite and the infinite, the back-fall, the musical pitch, the incidence of taxation ; upon social reform, the Evans' gambit, the inner meaning of the Pyramids,

and the principles of Greek harmony, the distribution of races, the wave theory in shipbuilding—the well-informed, the anti-parochial mind will have enough to do. A mixture of rope-dancing and juggling with brass balls will best describe the position of its representative in his social moments. When he is moved (and that is not infrequently) to commit his thoughts to paper, his undigested and varied acquirements lie in hard, coarse lumps upon his skin, instead of enriching his blood. He presents the spectacle of a clever dog who is constantly running round after his own tail. There is no real progress, no new work done, and nothing proved. The universal mind, after firing off its rockets, its blue lights, its Roman candles, and its ingenious combinations of all kinds of combustibles, has always ended by leaving the world a little darker than it found it.

How pleasing it is to escape from the restless clatter of productions such as these into the monastic calmness of a thoroughly parochial book! The 'Journey Round my Room' of Xavier de Maistre, the 'Tour Round my Garden' of Alphonse Karr, and the 'Natural History of Selborne' of Gilbert White, are the

first works of the kind that spring to the surface of my memory. The latter book is a perfect type of its class—a class that the world is always ready to welcome whenever it appears, and to preserve at all hazards from the chance of death.

The production of such books is not effected by yearnings after the broad, the grand, the infinite, but by the labour of earnest, patient men, who despise not the humblest pebble by the roadside. They are produced without any love of display, any affectation of superior knowledge, on the part of the writers; and they shine only in the simple beauty of truth and good faith. They are written with a concentrated conscientious love and regard for their subjects, and not with a constant eye to the audience on the other side of the footlights. They owe their birth more to a recording, resistless impulse within the writers than to the desire for fame or the greed of pecuniary profit.

If Boswell had felt a contempt for the parochial mind, the world would have lost one of the best biographies that has ever been written. The whole structure of its composition is essentially parochial. It deals with

only one man—one single, half-blind old man ; it regards him as the centre of a system, and only touches upon those who revolved round him as a crowd of accidental satellites. Nothing that ever happened to that man, no remark that ever fell from his lips, no journeys that he ever made, were without an intense interest to the parochial Boswell. The scraps of his letters were treasured like precious gold, and no suspicion of commonplace triviality ever checked the parochial mind in its welcome task of recording.

All this must seem very mean and very contemptible to the universal mind as it looks down from those lofty mounts from which it loves to sweep the horizon. Put all the books, however, that the latter has manufactured in the scale of human interest with the biographer's volumes, and which will be the load to win the trial ?

If every man who wields a pen, or lives with observing eyes, would take a hint from this triumph of the parochial mind, what works might we not have to refer to on our nearest and dearest bookshelves ? The records of a street, of a house, of a family, of a fishpond, or

a dead wall may be full of wisdom, poetry, and enduring interest, if only carefully collected.

What pleasure there is in grasping a favourite volume, and feeling, as you seem to shake the hand of the writer, that you are about to sit down for an hour's communion with one who devoted his whole life to a single subject! What satisfaction there is in looking upon such a sturdy octavo as it lies upon your table, and knowing that you have there a perfectly reliable guide to some little nook of knowledge! It is only such books as these that can really become the cherished companions of thinking men; the rest, for all the names they may proudly display upon their backs, must sink into neglect as a maze of literary upholstery.

The broad, the universal mind thinks differently from this, and acts in a manner consistent with its teaching. In its pleasures it always seeks the strange and the remote in preference to the familiar and the accessible. Its knowledge of its own country is confined to a few fashionable resorts and a few famous lakes, while in London it claims a merit for affecting a total ignorance of the suburbs.

What kind of wine is drunk by the peasants in the South of France, or what are the habits of the Neapolitan beggars, the universal mind is ever ready to tell you in books, in lectures, or in conversation ; but when you inquire what kind of food is consumed in Bethnal Green, or what has become of the Irish expelled from Field Lane and St. Giles's, the same universal mind is ignorantly and contemptuously silent.

Of the Louvre it knows much ; of Dulwich College very little ; and when it wishes to indulge in a view of sunrise, it flies at once to the Righi. It would never seek for unexpected aspects of Nature on the top of the Monument, far less on Primrose Hill, or the heights of Hampstead. And yet an hour or two may be spent far less agreeably and instructively than at the latter place watching the sunset on a summer's evening from the station of the old Hill Telegraph. There the parochial, if not the universal, mind may feed luxuriously upon the picture—the City lying in the valley, backed by the Surrey hills ; the plum-bloom mist that settles over the house-tops, the orange glow that comes from the hidden sun through the mellow side-trees of the country lane, that, seen

through an opening in the thick leaves, seems all on fire, the houses, lighted up into a bright burning yellow, the long, glistening glass of some building in the distant London valley that looks like a row of footlights or the furnaces in the Potteries, and the two towers of the Crystal Palace standing up like columns of living flame. It may seem an almost child-like Cockney weakness to be pleased with such sights as these ; but there they are, with many like them, for narrow-minded parochial gratification.

The same universal mind that closes its eyes and ears to such common, familiar things is easily traced in the formation of libraries and museums. A country town or village requires something that shall inform its ignorance, amuse its leisure, or elevate its taste, and the duty devolves upon the universal mind to decide upon the nature and organization of this something.

The first thing that raises its head, in all probability, is what is called a suitable building for an institution—a cold, oblong structure of stucco, built after the style of the Parthenon, with a portico like a four-post bedstead. The

first sight of such a building is enough to chill the young enthusiast bent upon improving his mind in the universal style, and the secret of the blight which seems to hang over its Doric columns is found in the fact that it harmonizes with no other part of the old town, not even with the bleak, bare Congregational chapel.

The next step is to fill this receptacle after the most approved plan ; and here the universal mind is seen in remarkable vigour. Subscriptions are solicited, donations are thankfully received, and a collection grows up that is as varied as the stock-in-trade of a general curiosity dealer. One leg, two-thirds of an arm, and a portion of the neck of a man or woman in sooty relieve on a crumbled stone is joyfully accepted as a representative of Grecian sculpture. It came from some temple ; it was presented by some advocate for the diffusion of universal knowledge, and it is duly ticketed as a notable object of interest. The mummy of an Egyptian prince, supposed to be about eighteen hundred years old, is always welcome in such a place, as well as the tooth of a whale or an elephant, and the skeleton of a crocodile. Two or three vertebræ of a rhinoceros, an

Indian sable, a lizard's skin from Brazil, a petrified toadstool, a precious stone from Ethiopia, an Assyrian bean, and a Persian tobacco-pipe are always sure of being put in posts of honour. A wooden effigy of Osiris, a copper idol from Siam, a Roman buckle, a pair of Norwegian skates, an earthen vessel from China, a basket of Muscovian money, a beetle brought from the Cape of Good Hope, the brain-pan of an ostrich, and a preserved thunderbolt from the vale of Chamouni are equally prized and equally honoured.

Where is England represented in such a motley collection? and, above all, where is the corner devoted to the particular village, town, county, or parish in which the exhibition stands? What is the character or meaning of such an exhibition? and what can it possibly teach? Has it any local stamp, or local colour, or local interest? Might it not be all pitch-forked into a travelling caravan and driven from place to place as a thing without root? If any one effigy or anatomical wonder were taken away, and another effigy or anatomical wonder introduced instead, would any hidden harmony be disturbed, or any sense of fitness

be outraged? If the old rampant lion in front of the town-hall were struck down by an unlucky flash of lightning or a gust of wind, a thousand men (of course with parochial minds) would feel as if their right hands had been cut off, or their front teeth had been maliciously drawn by enchantment in the night. But if the fragment of the Greek gladiator in the universal museum were stolen by gipsies, with a view to a heavy ransom, there would hardly be a man in the county or parish who would subscribe a copper for its rescue.

If the parochial mind, through good or evil report, would devote itself to the formation of thoroughly parochial museums, what different results might be arrived at! No little obscure village is too small or too remote to be utterly worthless to itself, and by respecting its own individual value it takes the surest course to become generally respected.

Wherever a road has been cut, a tree planted, and smoke has curled from the meanest cottages, wherever men have been born, have suffered, and have died, there is much that ought never to be buried and forgotten. The origin, the progress, or even the decay of such a place, its

daily life, its dimly-remembered worthies, its old traditions, its old songs, its hopes and fears, its joys and sorrows, are all worthy of historical preservation.

It may be that the universal mind, when it condescends to trace a local event, to prove a fact, or substantiate a date, would not be displeased to find such a well-filled storehouse ready to its hand, overflowing with the rich materials of county history. What an amount of hopeless error, of idle speculation, of English composition, would be saved to the world by the existence of such parochial records! If Warwickshire had only thought and acted like this in Shakespeare's time, what pleasant and profitable pilgrimages might now be made! what bitter controversies might never have been heard of!

If the parochial mind was a little more active in the field of politics than it seems to be at present, it would rather raise than lower the dignity of the country. Our senators seem to be nothing if not universal. Their grasp of intellect makes the timid taxpayer tremble, and their denunciations of foreign tyrants are masterpieces of fretful, useless declamation.

When Little Pedlington steps out of its proper sphere, to place one hand upon its heart and to point at distant unpopular emperors with the other, it is then that it plunges headlong into the gulf of hopeless Bumbleism. Keeping within its own walls, and working upon its own vineyard, it is unassailable by the keenest shafts of ridicule: beyond these wholesome limits it is weaker than a child. Its representatives are members for Little Pedlington, and not the champions of all Europe in distress. The Little Pedlingtons of Gloucestershire, of Somersetshire, and of Staffordshire have surely matters of more pressing local interest to occupy their minds than the willing or unwilling annexation of Nice and Savoy. Their members should be told this in no inaudible voice; and this evergushing, universal tendency to flow into other people's property should be unmistakably dammed up. The gift of seeing ourselves as others see us is vouchsafed to few, and those Little Pedlington members, it seems, are not amongst the number.

However backward the parochial mind may be in asserting its dominion over education,

literature, history, science, and art, the inevitable changes of financial government will force it into the front rank of politics. Our indirect taxation—a system under which no man can tell how much he pays to the State—is crumbling beneath our feet, to be replaced by direct taxes, which everyone will see and feel. When the bulk of that necessary or unnecessary expenditure of seventy or eighty annual millions sterling has to be met by an income-tax of perhaps about five shillings in the pound, it will then be astonishing to see the rising crops of breeches-pocket politicians, the growth of non-intervention principles, and the intoxicating popularity of the despised parochial mind.

A PENITENTIAL MATINÉE

A REAL STUDY IN BLACK AND WHITE

AFTER the Gargantuan gorging of the festive season comes the penitential fast—the bread and water and salt, if not the nauseous black-draught and blue-pill. After the Lord Mayor's Show, according to the philosopher of the street, comes the inevitable dust-cart. After the feast of pantomimes—the surfeit of tinsel—the jaded palate pines for a wholesome corrective. Where shall it be sought? The 'Chamber of Horrors' at Madame Tussaud's? No. The Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons? No. The Political Economy corner of the British Museum? No. A lecture at the Society of Arts on International Exhibitions? Emphatically, No! Those who wish to find this rarity must shun the ordinary

channels of advertisement, and avoid the beaten tracks of amusement.

In the spirit of Arctic explorers and dear old Mungo Park, they must walk and endure, must watch and inquire, must toil and suffer, sometimes to fail utterly and return depressed to their starting-point, at other times to be rewarded with a great discovery. I have been an explorer of this kind myself, not always successful; but, at this moment, I think I can suggest a thoroughly dismal and penitential half-holiday, productive of dismal reflections, dismal instruction, the greatest amount of misery, and the smallest amount of delight. It is a half-holiday that might safely be recommended to the refractory members of a reformatory.

To make such an 'outing' perfect, it is necessary to watch the weather. A day should be selected, damp and miserable, raw cold, without being invigorating, foggy, but not too foggy, with a little drizzling rain dashed with sleet—a day that costermongers, stall-keepers, and the great out-of-door strugglers detest, and that makes newspaper-hawkers discontented Socialists, thinking of the hateful workhouse.

Having selected the day and the weather, select your starting-point. Let it be the most prosperous, or apparently prosperous, part of London, where well-fed citizens either lounge or congregate, where the scent of well-cooked food flavours the air, and the glitter of good coal-fires is reflected in the window-panes.

Get out of the dismal streets as soon as you can and seek relief in the Underground Railway. A little sulphuretted hydrogen more or less will not hurt you: it is supposed to be anti-rheumatic. On a foggy winter's day the 'Underground' is comparatively cheerful. Get out at the 'Mansion House,' as it is called, the Mansion House being a quarter of a mile further eastward. In crossing at the real Mansion House towards the Bank of England be polite to any old lady in black who objects to dive under the shafts of waggons or the legs of horses. She is going to the Bank to receive her dividends, and you never know what may happen. In crossing never fail to admire population as population. Christen the human maelstrom 'Malthus Circus,' and feel proud of yourself as a member, however unworthy, of a great country.

Observe the Big Bullion Bungalow, called the Bank of England, and admire the financial wisdom which has not hesitated to sacrifice a couple of millions sterling or more rather than build in the modern fashion, seven or eight stories high, and risk being destroyed by the shells of French, German, Russian, or American invaders. If you walk through the Bullion Bungalow Bank of your beloved country, notice and admire the central flower-garden, where every geranium has a ground value equal to a Civil Service pension.

Leaving the Bank, go down 'The Street' (it used to be called Throgmorton Street) and notice the frantic, excited mob playing the only game of 'pitch and toss' legally tolerated in this country. Go along Houndsditch—one of the chosen streets of the chosen people—and turn off to the right near the Aldgate top into Mitre Square to visit one of the bloody shrines of the greatest and most mysterious murderer of the present century. In a corner of this square, or yard, overshadowed by lofty warehouses, a murder was committed not long ago (one of a long series) that stands alone, unequalled. A woman of a miserable class was

killed under circumstances of peculiar atrocity at twelve o'clock on a certain night, the same man (we have a right to assume) having previously murdered a woman of the same class in the same savage way, less than an hour before, at a place more than a mile distant from this Mitre Square corner. All the answer that we get to clear up this, and more kindred mysteries, from our costly and elaborate legal system is a phrase and nothing more—'Jack the Ripper.'

After this little dip into the gory byways of crime, you will be prepared for what you are to see at the approaching end of your journey. At the top of the Minories you will pass between the Government Coin Factory, the Mint, and that petrified block of English history, the Tower, and will enter the massive St. Katherine's Docks. In a corner of one of the harbours of this great shipping refuge lies a sullen-looking hulk, short, square-built, greasy with the dirt of ages, a convict-ship of the bad old times, one hundred years old, called *Success*. 'Pandemonium,' 'Inferno,' 'Bottomless Pit,' would have been better titles. Dressed up for a show at one shilling a head—a reduction for parties and

children—sailing about the world ‘on tour,’ exhibited with illustrative wax-works, original, or quasi-original fetters, pictures of celebrated Australian criminals, instruments of torture, or, what was then the same thing, punishment, a real old-fashioned, wiry ‘cat-o’-nine-tails,’ a corroded iron tank, called the ‘compulsory bath,’ and long rows of condemned cells in the middle and lower deck; this was how violent crime was housed and treated by our grandfathers down to the beginning of the fifties.

Everything about this sturdy hulk spoke of strength and brutality. Men like wild beasts were treated like wild beasts. They were housed like wild beasts, fed like wild beasts; and if they were not clothed like wild beasts, it was probably not owing to the humanity of the warders, but to the existence of something like a rough law of public decency. Solitary confinement was enforced for the slightest offence, and the miserable wretches, maddened by perpetual darkness and the hellish monotony of their lives, put an end to themselves by dashing their brains out against the walls of their filthy cells. Occasionally they combined

against their guardians and persecutors, and then the brains of authority were hacked out with pickaxes and hatchets. In spite of the Divine law of Supply and Demand, it is impossible to believe that those in authority were not largely recruited from the ranks of semi-savages.

On board this demon-hulk—too real and substantial, unfortunately, for a phantom ship—the waxwork artist has done his best to realize the living death of the floating prison. His figures have the usual yellow-jaundiced look and fixed glassy stare of inferior waxwork, and the stuffed legs and arms of notorious ruffians, credited with a long list of murders and outrages, look somewhat feeble and withered for muscular heathenism. Curiosities, like the iron armour of Kelly, the bushranger, are exhibited on the deck. Kelly was a comparatively latter-day ruffian, and his armour, standing up without a man in it, looks like the furnace and stove-pipe of a roasted-chestnut stall.

Some of the convicts who had to endure the penal servitude of this cursed vessel of torture were, unfortunately, not always guilty. They

were convicted by mistake. One was Mr. W. H. Barber, a solicitor in the forties, who, acting for a practised swindler named Fletcher in some business with the Bank of England, was accused and found guilty of complicity in the forging of dividend warrants. Although an educated man, conscious of his innocence, he was treated like a felon, herded with felons of the lowest type, and sent to Botany Bay, the colony which was at that time the dumping-ground for our criminal classes. The Government had to pardon him, after a long agitation on the part of his friends, and give him £5,000 compensation. In this they showed more wisdom than in selecting as a penal settlement a place that must have been modelled on the Garden of Eden, and only giving it up when the colonists—our unruly children—plainly told them that they must find another harbour for home-made blackguards.

The convict ship, if not a cheerful show or a place in which to spend an altogether happy day, gives the modern Cockney an interesting glimpse of the past—if a past of a rather sombre and not over-creditable kind. When the Cockney gets out of the docks and the

past on to the Tower Bridge, with all its capital, labour and ingenuity, and into the present with all its faults, he ought to go down on his knees and thank his God that he is privileged to live at the latter end of this much-abused century. Even here, however, his joy must be tempered with humility and reflection. Industry has its victims, if not its murders. A high authority has told us that all these great works are cemented with blood. For every forty thousand pounds sterling laid down a human life has to be sacrificed.

Fortunately there is a bright side to every gloomy picture, even the black study of old convict life which we have just left behind us. On our way to the docks and the 'sheer old hulk' we passed that interesting factory on the top of Mount St. Lucre (formerly Tower Hill) where Government ingenuity makes a penny out of a farthing's-worth of copper and a shilling out of four-pennyworth of silver.

This is not fraud, but Imperial currency. To atone for this the Mint, unlike any other mints in the world, turns out a spotless sovereign—a State counter that is all it professes to be and something more; an honoured

guest, a welcome ambassador in every country of the world, speaking the one universal language, gold.

Even the dust of this precious metal, this mystery of nature, has led men into temptation. A criminal of criminals, whose chief jemmy and centre-bit was capital—a rich and rare instrument, not often finding a place in the Newgate Calendar—put some thousands of these spotless coins in a long sack, and by shaking it backwards and forwards produced a bushel of that dust which is really worth a King's ransom.

For this he was sent to the Garden of Eden, enclosed in the dismal hulk, but the halo of gold was round him and he revelled in pitch without being defiled. His wife—his faithful partner in the sweating business—also went to the Land of Paradise, as a passenger, not at the Government expense. She started in business, and, being a lone woman, she required help, and nothing would suit her but a well-conducted convict. She was very particular in her selection, insisted on the strictest testimony as to character, and until that day had never known what a model she possessed in her husband, who (quite accident-

ally, of course, and unknown to the authorities) was selected as her servant. He behaved so well in his new employment (according to her periodical reports, written on official foolscap with a margin and the convict's number in the left-hand top corner) that in a comparatively short time he obtained a pardon. Such is life. They lived happily ever after at Bayswater, and rode in their own carriage.

BOHEMIA IN LONDON

UNLESS you are a Bohemian born and bred, with a sneaking tolerance for vagabonds of both sexes, and if you have to pose as a family man, I strongly advise you to think twice before you take a dwelling in a gay neighbourhood. It need not be an active gay neighbourhood; it need not be anything more than an historical gay neighbourhood; it may have turned its back on its original vices, if it ever had any, and may, in Shakespeare's refined words, 'have purged and lived cleanly,' but it is far more easy to turn a chapel into a theatre, as was done at the old Court playhouse at Chelsea, than it is to turn a theatre into a chapel. In the words of another poet, slightly altered—

'You may break, you may shatter the vase as you will,
But the otto of roses will cling to it still.'

Patchouli Terrace may be turned into Ebenezer Place, Paphian Street may become Salvation Arcade, and Bacchus Grove may become St. Aquinas Avenue; but all to no purpose: you cannot turn your back on tradition in less time than half a century, and you cannot suddenly raise a breed of cabmen who have no memories.

A friend of mine, not by any means a pioneer, once pitched his tent in one of these places. It is not necessary to say which, except that it was one that by its development and surroundings ought to have been credited with a new life and reputation. Its original sins, however, if it had any, or rather the sins of a small and insignificant portion of the district, were visited on its inhabitants to the third and fourth generation. My friend was heavily rented, heavily rated. His address was in the 'Court Guide'; he received daily begging letters from clergymen and the patrons of charities; he went to church himself, and his family went more so. He wore a tall silk hat and a frock-coat, was very partial to umbrellas, and was never seen in a straw hat or tanned boots. His family dressed mostly in

black. The female portion wore veils, and might easily have been taken for Scripture-readers. His servants, what few he kept, were models of propriety; and he could only be accused of one fault—he avoided taking credit in the neighbourhood, and paid his tradespeople with vulgar ready money. This was a fault, I admit, but it was hardly a crime, and it was not sufficient to justify his being classed, as he was, as one of the tainted aborigines of his settlement.

When he took a cab, as he occasionally did, to drive home from a distant part of the town, the cabman, on hearing the address, immediately assumed a festive air, and thought it to be his duty to drive at break-neck speed, and not to be too careful about collisions. When my unfortunate friend arrived home, and tendered an ample, if not a reckless fare, the driver smiled all over his face, cocked his hat on one side, and absolutely winked his eye as he said to the astonished fare, ‘What is five bob to a gent of pleasure?’

My friend’s tradesmen, notwithstanding prompt payment, thought it necessary to charge about five-and-twenty per cent. more

than the prices ruling in more obscure districts, in order to play up to the supposed character of the neighbourhood. The gigantic 'Store,' which was now a feature in this as in every other part of London, and had long dropped the title of 'Co-operative,' did all it could to bring down these prices by wholesale competition, but it made up for this by increasing its stock of independence and insolence.

None of the tradesmen were fulsome, there was no occasion for that, and the old character of the neighbourhood destroyed this exaggeration of trading civility years ago; but they hardly went the length of the 'Stores,' and served their despised customers as if they were conferring a royal favour.

My unfortunate friend's wife, being of an economical turn, was a great patron of omnibuses when the prowling cabmen would allow her; but these gentlemen thought they had a vested right in every lady who lived in the once festive district. They blocked the approach to the public vehicle, and when they were defeated, frequently asked the lady if she was reduced to a 'penny ride to Piccadilly Circus.'

Nothing short of a bishop in full canonicals would have silenced these prowlers, who declined to forget the history of the district. Sometimes they were offensively civil, but their civility was largely adulterated with patronage. One day a young lady was paying my friend's family a visit. It was a soaking wet afternoon, and as she paid the full fare, and a bit over, the dripping cabman was melted into pity. 'A very bad day, miss,' he said, 'for your business, but I think it'll clear up afore long! At least, I 'ope so!'

My friend now lives in Clapham.

GLOOMSBURY

SINCE the Central Ducal Desert of No Thoroughfare has been opened up by the abolition of the gates and bars of Bloomsbury—an abolition that was only obtained by half a century's persistent agitation—a great change has come over this important portion of Central London. Gloombsbury, as it might have been called—the butt of Theodore Hook and Mrs. Trollope, the mother of Anthony—is gradually losing its solid, sulky, residential mansions, and acquiring in their place the red-bricked and yellow-ceramic, turret-roofed blocks which are evidently copied from young Pimlico and old Chelsea.

His Grace of Bedford, like his Grace of Westminster, and his Grace *in futuro* of Cadogan, has discovered that flats, whatever they may be, are not 'weary, stale, and un-

profitable,' and that it is better to serve a nation of lodgers with 'self-contained' tenements than a nation of Englishmen with old-fashioned and imaginary castles. A little sacrifice has, of course, to be made in appearance by the Land King. That curious instrument of property rights, of take-it-or-leave-it might, of 'King of the Castle' power and 'dirty rascal' abasement—a Bedford lease—is superseded, if not supplanted, for ever by a self-contained tenement agreement; and the earthworm tenant when leaving his eligible castle after an occupancy of a few years is not asked to deposit a substantial sum for dilapidations, while another London serf is asked to deposit an equally substantial sum as a premium for entering into temporary possession of the same premises, with the precious privilege of making any improvements at his own expense and facing similar dilapidation claims at the end of his covenant. The self-contained hutches or 'pigeon-holes' are not papered with these property demands—the amount in money value is no doubt otherwise provided.

Bloomsbury, or Gloombsbury, has become a

newspaper topic in recent times, when something was wanted to relieve the eternal monotony of Dreyfus - Transvaal and Transvaal - Dreyfus, but no journalistic ingenuity could give much interest to a district which was made, and is still governed, by the British Museum. In spite of its ponderous air of ultra-respectability, however, it has had more undiscovered murders within its area—and the parochial borders which are generally included in the term 'Bloomsbury'—than any other district of equal size in the centre of London. They began to accumulate before the Great Coram Street mystery, and they have continued to accumulate. It is no aspersion on the highly-respectable 'Mrs. Todgers's' who are to be found in every street of Gloombsbury if the number of lodgers and lodging-houses are pointed at as some little explanation of this metropolitan curiosity.

The murder in Great Indecorum Street (where Thackeray lived in his early days) is still waiting for the coming Lecocq, like many other mysteries), but for the pure romance of Literature and Art, there is more in the dirty little Brook Street, Holborn, in the neighbour-

ing parish of St. Andrew's, where the boy Chatterton ended his misery, than in the whole of Gloombsbury put together, even with the 'Field of the Forty Footsteps,' and its legend. Cowper and Gray are respectable and immortal names amongst poets, though they scarcely give the romantic flavour which Richard Savage has conferred upon the next-door district of Soho.

The names of celebrities connected with Bloomsbury—with the exception of Dr. Dodd, the reverend forger, who 'went up Holborn Hill in a cart'—were all essentially Bloomsburian. They were all a credit to the district, and knew how to behave themselves, like the Devil in Southey's poem—

'He came into London by Tottenham Court Road,
Rather by chance than by whim,
And there he saw Brothers the Prophet,
And Brothers the Prophet saw him.'

The law was always largely represented. Lord Thurlow, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Justice Holroyd, Chief Justice Tenterden, Lord Denman, Lord Eldon, Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd (who dared to be a poet), and many others whose names can be found in that most valu-

able book and its extension, Peter Cunningham's 'Handbook of London.'

The actors, like the legal profession, always favoured Gloombsbury, and probably for the same reason—it was near their business. In the day when no actor at the two Patent Theatres was allowed by contract to live more than a mile from his workshop, except at his own risk and expense, it is wonderful that so few eminent comedians were found in or upon the borders of the most dismal street in London—Gower Street. Those who indulged in the luxury of a cottage at Chiswick, or a villa at Twickenham or Hampton Court, stood the chance of being called to a sudden rehearsal by a post-chaise messenger, at the cost of about two nights' salary.

Literature in its highest and most fanciful form may not have clung to Gloombsbury, with two eminent exceptions; but John Ruskin, Samuel Warren, Sheridan Knowles, Sir James Mackintosh, Miss Mitford, George Augustus Sala, F. C. Burnand, with artists like John Leech and John Constable, are names to set against John Philip Kemble, Harley, Dodd (Garrick's Dodd), and one or two others, in-

cluding Forbes Robertson, artist and actor. Apart from and above all these, however, are two giant names—Charles Dickens and Benjamin Disraeli. Dickens, according to strict parochial limits, was doubtless in St. Pancras; but when the time comes he shall have a statue in Bloomsbury representing him tramping alone through the night from Tavistock House, London, to Gad's Hill, Kent, accompanied by the children of his imagination—creations far more than phantoms—nursing them into enduring, living creatures blessed with eternal vitality.

Benjamin Disraeli was a genuine Bloomsburian. Born in Theobald's Road (once known as King's Road), in a house still standing, a door or two from John Street and facing Gray's Inn Gardens, he was a mere boy when his father, Isaac D'Israeli, still anxious to get nearer the British Museum, took the house No. 6, Hart Street, Bloomsbury, sometimes called No. 5, Bloomsbury Square, because the side fronted the square, the entrance being in Hart Street. This house was (and is) a mansion not easily matched in Mayfair. Its entrance-hall was a spacious

chamber, floored with marble slabs, with a large fireplace, a broad stone staircase, Adams plaques on the walls, and Adams balustrades and landings, Spanish mahogany doors, and recessed windows.

I have reason to know that Isaac D'Israeli at that time, bookworm as he was, had the command of at least a couple of thousand pounds a year, but was modest and thrifty in his habits. Benjamin was sent across the fields to a 'Dame School' at Islington, in Colebrooke Row—the Row that was freshened up by the open New River, that had recollections of Colley Cibber, and that contained Charles Lamb's cottage, with the rural street-door that opened into the parlour. Benjamin went home in the afternoon (early in winter) down the south side of the Pentonville Mountain, past old Bagnigge Wells, and began his writing career at No. 6, Hart Street, Bloomsbury. He made considerable way with 'Vivian Gray,' to the astonishment of his father, who wondered much where he got his knowledge of fashionable society.

A SO-SO SABBATH IN LONDON

It is not a sightly street, and although it was named after a pious Bishop of London, it is a sad Sabbath-breaker. To find any parallel to Polyglot Street in this respect you must go eastwards to Rag Fair or Petticoat Lane, now decently called Middlesex Street, to the Bird Market in Bethnal Green, or southwards to the New Cut.

The church-bells of the ugliest church in London are doing all they can to frighten the English colony from the morning service. The remains of an insolvent King and the greatest art and dramatic critic of the century lie peaceably in the stony-hearted graveyard. But round the corner Polyglot Street is not at all peaceable. A few shops are closed, notably the bed-manufacturer's, which stands on the site of the

first attempt at an improved lodging-house for single men, before the 'models' were quite started. If biographies were truthful, a few celebrated authors and journalists would figure as lodgers at these pioneer chambers.

The bed-manufacturer observes the Day of Rest, as befits a bed-maker ; not so his neighbours. Saturday night, the great marketing night, has not exhausted their energies. The newsvendors, of course, are open, selling French, German, English, and Italian papers, *Zeitungs* and *Gazettas*, a few political pamphlets, matches, sweetstuff, cigarettes, tobacco, and snuff. *Charcuterie* shops are crowded with customers not only for strong-smelling Normandy cheeses, French mustard, pickles, and mysterious sausages from Hamburg, Bologna, and Strasbourg, but for bottles of light wine and other liquors not to be 'consumed on the premises.'

Although the neighbourhood is known as 'Petty France,' French is not by any means the predominating language. Polish, Russian, and Hungarian are occasionally heard ; German more frequently, and Italian more frequently still.

The few taverns are closed until after church-

time ; but when open, with one or two British exceptions, they are 'houses of call' for couriers and the Swiss colony. A fishmonger is open as if it was market-day at Billingsgate, and the tempting announcement 'Ice' is displayed in large letters amongst the periwinkles. A clothier is ready to serve you with 'hand-me-down' clothes, or to 'swop' with you the heavy overcoat on your back (if you have an overcoat) for something more suitable for the summer season. The boot-seller invites your patronage, and a particularly prominent hosier's is open, where dazzling rainbow ties can be bought for adornment, or 'dickeys' and cuffs for apparent cleanliness.

The various restaurants of several nationalities are making ready to begin with the knife-and-fork breakfasts. If you want to revive your recollection of Vienna cooking (which probably you don't), a little retired house is ready to oblige you ; and a more pretentious Berlin Gast-Haus is willing to serve you with 'Sauer-Kraut mit Schweinefleisch.' Roast pork with stewed prunes is often 'on'—a variation of the John Bull applesauce—and so is jam-tart with roast duck.

There are several Italian restaurants of various degrees of importance, where the gradations of vermicelli, spaghetti, and macaroni can be studied. One has a reputation beyond the boundary lines of 'Petty France,' as the old Rocher de Cancale in Paris, many years ago, had a reputation beyond the slums where it was situated. I dare not mention its name, as I know what happened to a well-known restaurant in the Polyglot Street district. It started with the best potage ever made or sold at threepence a plate, and the rest of the menu in proportion, until one unfortunate day it was 'discovered' by an enterprising journalist belonging to a leading paper; the inevitable article appeared, and from that hour the prices became somewhat different.

The French restaurants of 'Petty France' are very numerous, and, as they have their regular customers twice a day, they are not dependent on their external attractions to tempt the passer-by. Two dusty oranges in a shop-window, backed by a not over-clean muslin curtain, are not altogether enticing, but it would be a mistake to assume that the food

within is bad because it is cheap. Many of these restaurants supply themselves from the large restaurants at the West End, taking any surplus food left over from the day before. Clever cookery makes up for want of absolute freshness ; and at most of these places sound light wines can be got at one-third of the prices charged by more pretentious establishments.

The French butcher in the side-street, if not absolutely open, has his trade-door ajar ; the French greengrocer is modest and retiring, but open ; and the French baker has his really excellent bread and well-made pastry half concealed by a drawn-down blind. It is left for the English part of the colony to abuse and brutalize the liberty tolerated in this exceptional neighbourhood. An ironmonger's is open, where you can buy anything, from an American stove to a pennyworth of tin-tacks ; while opposite is a second-hand furniture-dealer, who is holding a Dutch auction on his doorstep. He is selling flat-irons, coal-scuttles, chipped china, dilapidated oil-lamps, strips of carpet, saucepans, odd sets of fire-irons, old

lace curtains, and the sweepings of many garrets, talking all the while to twenty or thirty people, chiefly women. When the opposite public-house opens at one o'clock, his pockets will be gorged, his audience probably gone, and he will certainly be very thirsty.

‘LET US ALL BE UNHAPPY ON SUNDAY’

SOME few years ago a very law-abiding and God-fearing man, a native of that part of the kingdom which makes an idol of the Sabbath—a man in a high official position, administering the laws of his country—wrote a short poem, bearing the title at the head of this paper, which doubtless shocked the righteous overmuch, if they understood the spirit of sarcasm in which it was written. He advised the pedants, made up of stiff clay, and the sour-faced children of sorrow, to make the most of the day before them, in face of the inevitable Sabbath. He had evidently had enough of the Scotch Sunday. He probably knew its hollowness and hypocrisy. He was not even respectful to Permissive Bills. He

described a P.B. as ‘a Bill to permit *you* to prevent *me* from having a glass of beer.’

The discussion with the somewhat misleading heading of ‘Sunday Night in London’ has shown a stupendous ignorance on the part of the majority of what a London Sunday is at the present day, and an equally stupendous impudence on the part of the minority in stating what they wish to make it.

The majority who write about the want of sacred concerts on Sunday either never knew, or must have forgotten, how many choral churches, chapels, abbeys, and cathedrals (with and without orchestras) are open morning, noon, and night; how many halls are open for afternoon performances of secular music, that is, music a trifle more dull than the *Stabat Mater*; how many night institutions are open for lectures, discussions, recitations, and even dramatic representations; how many clubs include music, and, in some cases, dancing amongst their attractions; how many public gardens are open in the summer, and how many picture-galleries are open in the winter.

I will say nothing about the Salvation Army, who have their dépôts all over the town, and

their musical promenades in most of the leading thoroughfares, and I will merely mention the bands in the parks, on the terrace at Windsor, and in connection with the army church parades, and that lively and pretty ditch, the Thames, where the musical fanatic, in the season, can enjoy fifty miles of banjo and accordion. All this may fall short of a Volks-Garten in the grounds of Buckingham Palace with a band of European reputation, but it is surely a wedge the end of which cannot be called very thin.

In apparent ignorance of all this, the official representatives of the Stagnant Sunday Organizations try to frighten the public with legal bogies. Acts of Parliament made for a very different England, and a far more different London, are picked out of those melancholy records of royal and human folly, the statutes at large, and shaken at the criminals. The man on the knife-board is to read this list and tremble—a list that looks like a chemist's prescription : Edward III., Henry VI., James I., 1 C. I. c. 1 (1625), C. II., William and Mary, Anne, William III., George III., and George IV., etc. This is a pretty Sunday

mixture, most of it made up by rulers who were not altogether led by their parliaments. Government is one thing ; Bumbledon, even royal Bumbledon, is another. Where are those Acts now ? With one or two exceptions, they might just as well be described by this formula : 6th and 7th Mary Jane, cap. 68 ; 25th King Jackass II., c. 36 ; 3rd and 4th, Black Sal and Dusty Bob, c. 14 ; King Bumble II., c. 24.

The only Acts in the list in a state of suspended animation are the Sunday Trading Act of Charles II. (29 C. II. c. 7), which has been partly repealed, and the 21 George III., c. 49. The first Act has been occasionally enforced against a few wretched barbers in a town like Derby, one of the greatest railway-centres of Sunday railway traffic in England ; and the second Act has been enforced more than once against people who open places like the Brighton Aquarium on a Sunday.

The prosecution of this institution in 1875 had this great and beneficial effect—the fangs of the Mad King’s Bill were drawn by a short Act of amendment (38 and 39 Vic., c. 80), giving the Crown absolute power to remit

penalties. The Mad King had a liberal notion of fines: two hundred pounds a day for the owner of the disorderly house, one hundred pounds a day for the sleek acting-manager, and fifty pounds a day each for every door-keeper, servant, and ticket-collector. The bulk of these fat penalties was to go to the informer.

Like the Drunken Prostitutes Act of George II. (25 Geo. II., c. 36), which now governs many theatres and all the music-halls in London and the provinces, the Mad King's Act had an object above and beyond public decency on the Sabbath. It was passed to stop unpleasant political debates at places of public meeting.

In defending their cause, the official representatives of the Stagnant Sunday Organizations have quoted certain figures given them by Sir Howard Vincent, which are made to prove, or to appear to prove, that crime increases in certain foreign countries in proportion to the social liberty of the Sabbath. These figures want verification, and a careful inquiry into cause and effect. Sir Howard Vincent is an observant traveller, and his ex-

perience, I fancy, would hardly justify the Sabbatarians’ assertion. In any case, with the exception of Russia, none of these countries can equal the consumption of intoxicants in England, or the hypocrisy which draws forty millions sterling a year from this degrading source, while pretending to favour the cause of temperance.

THE DAWN OF THE PRESENT CENTURY

WE hear a good deal just now of the latter days of the century ; perhaps a few words about the dawn of the century may not be altogether ill-timed or unwelcome.

It was the heyday of stamp and paper duties. There were about half a dozen newspapers, too dear for the multitude to buy, and probably only published, like the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews*, for the select few to read. There was no gas. Oil-lamps enlivened the streets, and at the theatres candles, supposed to be wax, dripped down the back of your dress-clothes.

Chelsea was a village separated from London by the Five Fields at Pimlico, and the Foot-pad's Pass, called Bloody Bridge, somewhere where the Court Theatre now stands. Visitors

to the playhouses from Chelsea used to assemble after the performance at the bottom of St. James's Street until they numbered about thirty or forty strong, and then marched across the Five Fields with torches, blunderbusses, and bludgeons—a mutual protection association. Nothing was safe—not even the Bank of England. The one-pound note was not a universal favourite, and the street poets sang that they would 'rather have a guinea.'

The year 1800—the year of the Union—found London and England in this state. People advertised openly to purchase places in the public service. The usual swindling advertisements under the heading of 'Matrimony' appeared occasionally in the journals. Nottingham, which is now about two hours and a half from London, with trains nearly every hour, day and night, is thus dealt with :

'A lady going to Nottingham in a week or two wishes to make a third in a chaise. A gentleman and lady, or two elderly gentlemen, preferred.—Address, X.Y., 2 Clement's Court, Milk Street.'

'The cutter *Enterprise*, of Guernsey (Amice

Lecocq, commander), a prime sailer, armed with four guns, small-arms, etc., and having excellent accommodation for passengers, sails from Weymouth for Guernsey every Thursday.'

'A gentleman offers to lend his chaise gratis to a party for Exeter or Truro if the borrowers will kindly leave it, when done with, for preference at Truro.'

Covent Garden Theatre, secure in its patent monopoly rights to perform Shakespeare, and empowered to prosecute up to imprisonment any encroachers on these legitimate preserves, gives up its stage to Mendoza, the prize-fighter, for a sparring exhibition.

Mrs. Jordan, at Drury Lane, 'Respectfully informs the public that her night is fixed for Monday, the 12th (January, 1800), when she promises a comedy, and to sing, accompanying herself on the Lute.'

State lotteries were legal in 1800, and large diamonds, the predecessors of the Koh-i-Noor, were disposed of in this way.

The Budget expenses for 1800 were under forty millions ; army and navy, as usual, taking the lead. This sum was provided for by four millions of indirect taxes, and over five millions

of Income-tax, the remainder being made up of credits, surpluses, and loans, and three millions charged for renewing the Bank of England Charter.

George Washington dies ; and Bonaparte is Chief Consul of France. France soon became an empire ; and America was, and still is, a republic.

A Bill to prevent bull-baiting was thrown out in the House of Commons by a majority of two, and the King, George III., went in state to the House of Lords to give his royal consent (July 2) to the union with Ireland. Bull-baiting, to judge by the speeches of many distinguished statesmen, was looked upon as one of the pillars of the British Constitution.

Forestalling — buying produce months in advance — was then a crime, and occasionally duly punished. A watchman named Night is fined for assaulting a drunken citizen, who complained that he was calling the wrong hour and the wrong weather. Sentence of death was passed on a number of prisoners for various offences — burglary, sheep-stealing, highway-robbery, horse-stealing, forgery, firing a pistol, coining, and taking a bill out of a letter in the

Post Office. No executions took place, at that moment, for stealing linen off a hedge, or breaking down the bank of a fish-pond.

Footpads not only infested the country, but London and the suburbs, though they were not always successful. One stopped a French priest in the Edgware Road, and, not content with his few shillings, insisted on changing coats. When the priest got the thief's coat he ran away at full speed, the thief after him ; but the race was won by honesty and virtue, as it always should be. When the priest searched the ragged garment he found £50.

Virtue was not always so well rewarded. In December, 1800, Mr. Townsend, the celebrated Bow Street runner, was robbed of his hat in the Chapel Royal. Neither the officer nor the place was held sacred. The wife of a gardener coming from Chiswick in a cart was attacked near Kensington Gore by two footpads. She knocked one down with the butt-end of her whip, and drove off unmolested. A man is killed at Deptford who resisted a pressgang, but the coroner's jury went through the form of bringing in a verdict of wilful murder against the lieutenant and midshipman. A man is badly bitten in attempting to take money out

of the mouth of a dog who was acting as a messenger.

The quantity of forged notes out (chiefly one-pounders) gave the Bank of England much trouble—at least, it said so. Churchyards are robbed of bodies—of course for the doctors. Duels are plentiful, and so are prize-fights. Belcher and Mendoza were the heroes of the hour. The favourite arenas were Wimbledon Common and Moulsey Hurst. Hyde Park Corner was used as the 'meet' for the scores of post-chaises and hackney-carriages going to these fights. The volunteers numbered 12,000, and had reviews in the same neighbourhood.

The Bread Spectre now makes its appearance. The quartern loaf is 1s. 3d. The House of Commons reports. It is still fond of reporting. It suggests that bakers should be compelled to sell stale bread instead of new, to check the consumption. 'It is a fact, proved by the clearest evidence, that one-half of the bread in London is consumed the day in which it is baked.' This sounds very dreadful, even towards the close of the century. The suggested prohibition became law, the fine for each offence being £5. Both Houses of Parliament pledged themselves and their families not to consume

more than one quartern loaf per head per week during the scarcity—of course, the artificial scarcity—of grain. The Lord Mayor issues an Order of Assize which raises the price of the quartern loaf to 1s. 5½d. The use of flour for pastry is prohibited (February, 1800) in the Royal Household by the Royal Family. Rice is used as a substitute in the palaces. Possible substitutes for wheaten flour were anxiously discussed. Bran came to the fore, but it appeared that pigs and poultry had the first charge on this material. Grains were suggested for pigs, and potatoes for humanity. The complaint arose that potatoes were not sufficiently cultivated ; but no Bill was brought in to make compulsory potato-farming the first duty of all good citizens. This showed great restraint on the part of the Legislature. Rice or potatoes were recommended to be mixed with wheat, to the extent of one-third. Coal now becomes scarce, and consequently dear. Fodder becomes dear ; and hackney-carriage fares are raised. The Lord Mayor, by another Assize Order, raises the price of the quartern loaf to 1s. 6d.

The soldiers are now told to hold themselves in readiness if required. The fish-market was then a close borough, as it is now—Free Trade

and advanced civilization having, in this instance, done nothing for the poor consumer. An attempt is made to render rice-bread popular. Selling from sample is denounced, and so is the middle-man ; while forestallers and regraters are prosecuted in all directions.

Riots now begin, and the denounced middle-men have a bad time of it. The mob, when it is enraged, generally burns down the wrong house and punishes the wrong people. In 1789 the mob destroyed the Bastile—an aristocratic prison which had rarely contained one of their order—and in 1871 they destroyed the Porte St. Martin Theatre, the favourite play-house of the Paris Commune.

Sunday amusements were not neglected or forbidden in 1800. About 200,000 people, according to a calculation, spent each Sunday in the summer in the suburban inns, tea-houses, etc., getting rid of £25,000. These roysterers were divided into :

Sober	...	...	...	50,000
In high glee	...	...	...	90,000
Drunkish	...	...	...	30,000
Staggering tipsy	...	...	...	10,000
Muzzy	...	...	...	15,000
Dead drunk	...	...	...	5,000
Total	...	...	...	200,000

The Prince of Wales, about this time, not feeling well, made an application to the King for leave to go to Lisbon or Madeira. The King referred the application to the Ministers, who refused their consent. The dresses of this period were objected to on the score of indelicacy. There was very little of them, and that little was too transparent. Mr. John Philip Kemble sat for his hundred and thirteenth portrait in 1800 ; this almost beats the theatrical photographic record of 1899.

KIPPERED HAMBURG

WHEN I first made the acquaintance of Hamburg, about forty years ago, it seemed to me to be the most fishy town I had ever entered, though I was familiar with Newhaven (N.B.), Great Grimsby, Lincolnshire, and the fisherman's town of Boulogne-sur-Mer. I approached it from the land side (I came from Berlin, which was then a rough city, paved with stones like egg-plums, and known to its Bohemians as the 'sanguinary' village), and I fancied I could smell it half an hour before I got to the station. As St. Petersburg still reminds me of Rotherhithe and Wapping, so Hamburg then reminded me of Lower Thames Street. The herring flavour predominated, as it always does. Roast pork is the conqueror in places like a baker's oven, where many joints

are cooked for the lower orders, and in all fishy towns the herring, red or not red, fresh, 'cured' or kippered, is the master of the situation.

I have recently revisited Hamburg, going to it from the port of Grimsby, in one of the fleet of steamships now owned by the Great Central Railway. These vessels are small, but clean and comfortable, well officered, not small enough to be 'cock-boats,' and not large enough to be floating hotels. A good sailor can perform the part of a yacht proprietor for a very moderate sum ; and a bad sailor can obtain the privacy of a good sea cabin. These boats carry cargo in the late summer, chiefly boxes of herrings.

The approach to Hamburg by water is not interesting. The Elbe is one of the most commonplace rivers in Europe. Far from being a Danube, a Rhine (even the Lower Rhine), or a Seine, it is not even a Volga or a Scheldt. About a couple of miles on, the right bank, before entering the harbour, presents some pretty object-lessons in wooded villa-building. It is better than the Mersey.

In 1860 Hamburg was a free city. It might have been called a free-and-easy city.

Its harbour was fringed with buildings like those of Old Havre, its population was like the population of Bute Street, Cardiff, and Ratcliffe Highway in the East of London ; its houses had all the vices of the vilest slums, and all the picturesque features for the aquarellist and the black-and-white artist. Its waterside houris were liberal in the display of their charms, which were independent of cleanliness, and the air was haddocky, herringy, dried-coddy, suggestive of the not very distant Heligoland and the Dogger Bank.

All this has, to all appearance, been improved off the face of the earth, to be crowded a little closer in the slummy suburb of Altona. Altona does all it can to preserve the old reputation of 'kippered Hamburg.' The old town-hall has not tumbled down or been destroyed, and the 'people's theatre' still exists where I saw the 'Forest of Bondy ; or, the Dog of Montargis,' in the sixties, under exceptional circumstances. The dog was an English bulldog, and refused to seize the red leathern thong of the villain's cravat, and he swung several times round the stage in the orthodox fashion. The dog preferred pinning the foot of the

villain to the boards, with the result that the curtain had to be rung down on an unrehearsed tableau.

Our steamship landed us at our appointed quay (duly lettered and numbered), and my personal luggage being a small wicker bag big enough to carry a woollen shirt, two paper collars, a brush, a toothbrush, a comb, a pair of socks, a travelling-cap, and a small brandy-flask—a sufficient outfit for India, as Sir Charles Napier thought—I walked away without any Customs interference, and sauntered at least a mile, inspecting the harbour, the docks, the quays, the warehouses, the drawbridges, and admiring the quiet German organization which controlled the enormous business without noise, jaw, or bluster.

At last I found myself at an outer bridge, and after I had crossed it, I was motioned into a side toll-house, where I passed before a couple of officers, opened my anchorite bag, and was soon outside the fortifications. I could not help comparing this with Liverpool or Southampton, the latter a disgrace to any civilized country.

I walked through the new city. My 'Kippered Hamburg' had nearly all dis-

appeared, and in its place was a combination of Regent Street, Bond Street, and Sloane Street, London, Bold Street, Liverpool, St. Ann's Square, Manchester, the Broadway, New York, the Boulevard Anspach, Brussels, the Rue de la Paix, Paris, the bazaars of St. Petersburg and Moscow, and the arcades of Berlin.

A little, but very little, of the ancient flavour remained. Here and there in the city of swell shops and swell shopkeepers little gaps between the mansions showed themselves, and ink-and-water canals were seen—a somewhat gloomy Venice, not as picturesque as Rotterdam, along which silent Charons were steering gloomy barges. Its home was certainly in the sea, but the salt seaweed had fled from the brickwork of its warehouses. One old-time place, the Messeburg, had escaped the pickaxe of improvement, and there the curious tourist may get some little idea of old ‘Kippered Hamburg.’

The smell of Sauer-Kraut, which comes up every now and then from the underground restaurants in some of the finest streets, shows that Germany has not been quite Frenchified.

The shopkeeper has copied and advanced upon his English model. His plate-glass front extends downwards to his basement, or kitchen floor, and he gets more space to dress his window, and show his damasks, his velvets and tapestry.

The tall, spiked, steepled churches, with their sea-green slates, like the roofs in Moscow, stand on the wooded boulevards, in the broad squares, in the bright and busy streets, and the busy market-places, but they are closed on every side with ultra-Protestant determination, except on Sundays.

The electric tramways run from everywhere to everywhere, being almost as ornamental on the outside as a Lord Mayor's state-coach, and much more comfortable within. Like the New York and French trams, they have no accommodation for outside passengers, probably owing to the electric current. The Imperial highway is theirs, and the foot passengers have to be watchful. Getting out of the way of a curvilinear tram, I was nearly knocked down by a cyclist, and in escaping him, I had to dodge a Swiss dining express train, which was running through the centre of the road and serving

luncheon at the same time, without any apparent signals or level-crossing keepers.

One great and distinguished feature which 'Kippered Hamburg' had in 1860, and still has, are the two great central dams, or lakes—the Alster and the Lombard. These, with their trees, their mansions, and their hotels round the banks, and their little steamers, their boats, and their steam-launches on the water, form something like an aquatic Hyde Park, and will always give Hamburg a distinctive character.

The cost of living is not extravagant. The carriages (victorias) are fairly good and cheap, the taximeter is in universal use, and the coachmen are civil. The cost of a tramway ride from any one point to another is rather less than a penny. The hotels in the best positions provide a good room for about three shillings a night. The restaurants are equally moderate, and a presentable table d'hôte dinner, served from one in the afternoon to nine at night, at separate tables, can be had for eighteenpence. Wine, as usual, is dear and hotelly, but lager-beer is drunk everywhere, and is properly kept and served by people

who know their business. Messrs. Allsopp may be glad to know that it is drawn through iced pipes, and is not sold 'with the chill off.' Boiled ginger-beer and Abernethy biscuits are not considered light refreshment at the few open-air cafés in Hamburg.

There is one experiment in the art of living—an art very little understood in England—which I should like to see copied in London, though I expect I shall be beheaded on Tower Hill by the Thames Conservancy Board for suggesting it. In the centre of the great dam is a lake restaurant and concert-room, with a ladies' swimming-bath at one end and a gentlemen's swimming-bath at the other. An equivalent position to this would be Chelsea Reach, not far from the Suspension Bridge. I am ashamed to make such a suggestion, because it ought to have been carried out forty years ago, about the time the bridge was opened and I was in 'Kipperd Hamburg.'

THE DEATH OF OLD CALAIS

THERE are certain cities of great historical interest which half the civilized world have agreed to regard as merely turnpikes. Calais is one of them. Considering the traffic that hurries through it day and night from year to year, never lingering longer than an antiquated Custom House system compels it to linger, it may take its place as the chief turnpike of the universe. Celebrities down at heel have made it their last refuge—Beau Brummell in one generation, and George Hudson, the railway king, in another. ‘Bloody Mary’ may have died with its name engraven on her heart; Ruskin may have lavished his poetic prose on the old weather-beaten cathedral; and Thackeray may have loved the little city, not wisely, but too well; but its old-fashioned,

rustic hostelrys have rarely been peopled with the tourist—personally conducted or otherwise—and the familiar voice of the travelled American and his family has rarely been heard in its spacious market-place. Its outside supporters are a few wandering sailors and the well-to-do rustic population of the neighbouring villages. Its inn-yards on market-day are strongly suggestive of the Auberge des Adrets and the melodrama of 'Robert Macaire.' Gigs and hooded carts of strange appearance and clumsy construction crowd its narrow streets, and fossil diligences, driven off the road by the victorious railway, are utilized for the carriage of vegetables and dairy produce.

The French as a nation are not unjust to their heroes, but the Calais authorities, as a department or municipality, are not apparently much endowed with the national spirit. Opposite the old Flemish-looking town-hall, with its delicate iron lace-work turret and tinkling chimes, stands a bust on a dwarf column of the liberator of Calais—the Duc de Guise. This bust and column are not larger than a French nobleman would have in his library or vestibule, and look painfully mean when com-

pared with the great statue of Jean Bart erected in the grand square in the almost adjoining city of Dunkerque. Jean Bart was a bit of a filibuster in his day, and not the liberator of his city ; but his statue is twelve or fourteen feet high, and the Duc de Guise's bust is not the size of an ordinary cannon-ball. Very little respect is shown to the Calais liberator in another way. His palace has almost disappeared, and what remains of it at the end of the Rue de Guise is only an entrance to a rookery that would have disgraced the old days of St. Giles's.

Thackeray had a sentimental regard for Calais because it smelt of Sterne, and he loved even the comparatively modern Hôtel Dessein, in the Rue Courbet, at the back of the town-hall, though it was not the Calais hostelry of the 'Sentimental Journey.' This Thackerayan place of entertainment for man and beast is now no more ; the courtyard is closed, the signboard is taken down, and the grand old landlady who used to receive her guests like a duchess in black silk, and bow them in with wax candles, has now retired from the business of hospitality, leaving the ground to the Hôtel Meurice, in the Rue de Guise. The original Hôtel Dessein was in

the Rue Royale, the main road to Paris from Calais and the North of France, and formed part of a public garden and a small theatre. The hotel and the garden have long since been utilized for other purposes ; but the theatre still remains for the delight of the Calais population and their friends, the entrance being in a back-street which is as quiet as the grave.

The old ramparts are being replaced by new ones, and the old and evil-smelling ditch is now filled up, and its surface covered with asphalt, forming a fine road round the old city. The old railway station at the head of the harbour, now disused for traffic—the new stations being on the quay and on the St. Pierre side of the city—is much in the same state as it was for forty years, and ought to be modelled before it is destroyed. It was, without exception, the smallest, dirtiest, and most inconvenient station in Europe, and ought to be preserved in monumental form to show what the Great Northern Railway of France inflicted for so many years upon England as a revenge for Waterloo. If Madame Tussaud would oblige with a counterfeit presentment of old Robert, the octogenarian commissionaire, and his sixty-year-old son, who looked older than his father, the museum of

Calais curiosities would be well started ; and to these might be added the old Calais Gate, immortalized by Hogarth, which was for some time deprived of its drawbrige, and partly banked up by the new ditch-road. It is now bodily removed, like Temple Bar. Let us hope, for the sake of old associations, that it will find a sympathetic purchaser, but rumour says it has been broken up for road-stones.

The great dock and harbour works are going on apace, and Dunkerque will soon have a powerful rival. The engineers and architects have avoided the old city, making a circuit of the outer walls, unlike Oliver Cromwell, who during his temporary governorship of Dunkerque made a short cut to the sea-front through the ancient cathedral of St. Eloi, leaving the tower of the church on one side of the road and the body of the church on the other.

Sending forth its rays across the stormy waters—'the light that never was on sea or land'—trying to save all men, regardless of creeds, opposing nationalities, and even of Alsace and Lorraine, the tower of the light-house raises its lofty head, surmounted by a flash-light Christian glory that would grace a multitude of saints.

A TRAIN OF PLEASURE

IN England they call it an 'excursion train,' in France they call it a 'train of pleasure.' In the old days of the Spanish Inquisition, or the Council of Ten in Venice, it would have been an instrument of torture, whatever they called it.

It begins by starting when everybody is, or ought to be, in bed, and it ends in arriving somewhere before anybody is up. It sometimes varies this process by not arriving at all, or arriving half a day late. On the slightest provocation it goes into what is technically known as a 'siding.' Here it stops fast asleep until many trains have passed it, and only emerges drowsily to come into contact with luggage-trains and coal-trucks. Its carriages are selected, not for their comfort or beauty, but for their age and experience.

They know every inch of the road, or ought to, if they have not forgotten it.

In England its passengers have an uncontrollable desire to look out of window at all hours of the night, and to risk collisions with passing trains or projecting brickwork. In France its passengers have an equally uncontrollable desire to close all windows on the hottest day or night, and to try how near they can get to suffocation without absolutely reaching it. They recognise no law or courtesy of the road. To keep your seat you have to sit in it. They like to travel with food, and food means cheese, and cheese means Normandy cheese. Brie and Pont de l'Évêque are the favourites, in a state of ripe decomposition.

The train of pleasure is never in a hurry. There is a certain dignity about its movements. It lingers at small stations, and pays ceremonial visits to stationmasters and mistresses. It encourages street-organs on the platforms, collects money for the grinders, and never starts till the tune is finished.

The sleeping accommodation has to be improvised. Apoplexy is courted in every direction. Head-dresses are invented that

would frighten a den of lions. The snoring acts as a storm-signal from one station to another. It is almost as musical as a fog-horn, or the Scotch bagpipes in a back dining-room. Sometimes events occur that have not been altogether provided for, and the train of pleasure becomes a lying-in hospital. The train of pleasure loves to take a line of country that is crossed by as many frontiers as possible. A frontier means a Custom House, and sometimes a passport office.

The train of pleasure loves to have to make a connection with another train of pleasure, and to miss it by half an hour. This means another siding. The passengers exchange the carriages for the waiting-room, and sleep as comfortably as they would in a timber-yard. Some restless spirits, encouraged by daybreak, start off to 'do' the town or village, and, mistaking on their return one station for another, are never heard of again, leaving a legacy of unconsumed cheese and portmanteaus made of striped paste-board to the community of passengers.

When the train of pleasure arrives at its destination, which it does occasionally, the sleeping town is not ready to receive it,

having expected it many hours before. The passengers wash themselves at a street-fountain without soap, and dry themselves with pocket-handkerchiefs. After this, they sit in the empty grand square, or market - place, or on the cathedral steps, till the Auberge des Adrets or Lion of Gold opens its friendly portals.

ZOLA, BEWARE !

Most great men are doomed to find their Moscow. Some seek it, some stumble on it, some are led to it by fate, and some rush at it, in spite of timely warning. Is Emile Zola to be a victim? What demon has whispered to him to prepare a 'London' to follow 'Paris'? Has he forgotten Doré? Has he forgotten Heine?

The subject frightens no one but a Londoner bred and born. I am a Londoner of this kind, and not deficient in courage, but the name makes me tremble. I was born in London seventy years ago; and I have lived all my life in London. I have lived the life of London ever since I could walk. I know its heights; I know its depths. I have used its slums as a home, and not as a peep-show.

I have seen and shared its struggling poverty, its shabby gentility. I know its city life, its honest business and its fraudulent business. I know its humble, anxious tradesmen, its millionaires, its bankers and its gamblers, its newspapers and its editors, its books, its publishers, and its booksellers, its theatres and its actors, its journalists and its dramatic authors, its music-halls and its 'variety artists,' its painters and its sculptors, its statesmen and its officials, its musicians and its singers, its novelists and its reporters. I know its publicans and its sinners, its restaurants, its clubs, and its street caterers. I know its parsons, its judges, its lawyers, and its barristers. I know its acrobats, its jugglers, and its contortionists. I know all the puppets of the show, all the pieces on the great chessboard.

Have I lost my youth? Yes. Have I soured into a Brummagem Schopenhauer? No. Do I hate or love London? Both. I hate it, I loathe it, and I curse it; I love it, I adore it, and I bless it. I see in it heaven, hell, and purgatory. I see it working under the inexorable laws of creation. I see the innocent child crushed and mangled in the

streets, and the scrofulous ruffian going on his way rejoicing. I see Nature's slop-work—the lame, the halt, and the blind—limping through their pilgrimage of pain ; and I see men and women (made after God's own image) riding or walking in the sunshine of universal admiration. I think London, I dream London, I eat, drink, and breathe London. I wallow in its mud, I sniff its refuse, and I suck in its fog like milk. I see hollow-cheeked famine pass me, and know that every night one man, woman, or child must die of absolute, brutal starvation.

It is not for me to explain the mystery of pain in the universe, or to justify the ways of God to man. There is a well-fed Established Church, and I am a payer of rates and taxes. The law of averages accounts for much ; the reckless production of children accounts for more. Population means cheap labour, and cheap labour means prosperous and chirpy capital. Increase and multiply, by all means, my good people—increase and multiply. Obey your preachers. Does bread fall down from the heavens into hungry mouths ? Theoretically, yes ; but practically, no.

The City of Dreadful Starvation, the city of the golden pavement, the city of make-believe respectability, the city of twenty licensing systems and only one fish sauce, the city of magnificent distances and more magnificent contrasts, the city of unlimited pot-houses, the city whose patron saint is a blear-eyed, red-nosed old Jezebel, sometimes called Britannia, who is supported by a blazing gin-shop on one side and an Oriental opium den on the other, the city that cannot pay its way unless it draws something like forty millions sterling a year from national drunkenness—this is the city, with its angels and its fiends side by side, its Ormuz and Ahriman, its light and darkness, which Zola will have to grapple with under the name of ‘London.’

I pity Zola. Those whom the gods hate die old, and die in harness. A combination of Walt Whitman, Thomas de Quincey, and the writer of the ‘Song of Solomon,’ might do some little justice to the subject ; but Zola and his crammer, never !

‘SMITH’

THERE are certain commonplace names—the rank weeds of Kelly’s ‘Post Office London Directory’ (the most wonderful book in the world, and still growing)—that have an air of poetry about them. I do not care for Brown, nor Jones, nor Robinson, but I have a fancy for Smith. And when I say Smith, I do not mean the electro-plated Smythe—out upon such affectations!—but plain, unsophisticated Smith. It may be Cockney, it may be plebeian, though that, as the lawyers say, is arguable, but it is sweet and familiar, it gives you very little trouble to write, it leads to no mistakes of sound in casual introductions, and it paves the way for acquaintanceship, and ultimately friendship.

It was a name honoured by Charles I., who

assumed it when he wished to move about without embarrassing attention, and long before he was deified in the ‘ Icon Basiliké.’ It was a name selected by Charles Stuart, the Pretender, about a century later, when he wished to enter a kingdom that had put him to the door ; and it was the name selected by that not very romantic monarch Louis Philippe when he exchanged a turbulent Paris for a peaceful London. I say nothing about the Pretender, but I confess that the name seemed to fit the somewhat citizen - looking deposed French monarch better than it did the ascetic-looking Charles the Martyr.

Smith, again, was the name of the adventurer whose life was saved by the beautiful and romantic Pocahontas, and it was also the name of that rough-and-ready prophet with the more rough-and-ready prefix of ‘ Joe,’ who was the founder of the Mormon settlement and the Mormon religion.

Smith, again, was the name of the old Adam, king of political economists, who stood up for labour against capital and land as the source of all wealth, and was the first to advocate the doctrine of Free Trade.

Smith, again, was the name of the champion jokers, James and Horace, who wrote the 'Rejected Addresses,' and of the 'witty Dean of St. Paul's,' with the prefix of Sydney, who earned more popularity than the whole Bench of Bishops.

Smith, again, was the name of Old Morality, the most popular leader of the House of Commons, who had the honour of being black-balled by the Reform Club, that aristocratic body who could not tolerate a tradesman, though the Carlton was ready to welcome him, and who was quite as determined to die plain Mr. Smith as Mr. Gladstone was determined to remain Mr. Gladstone. He was a good tradesman, a good politician, and a good churchwarden. He once wrote to me for a church rate in connection with the church of St. Mary-le-Strand, and I wrote back that I would pay with pleasure if Dr. Evans, the broad-minded incumbent, would think in his prayers of the Gaiety Theatre.

EXIT SILVER

BLESSED is the nation that can carry on business with oyster-shells. By oyster-shells I do not mean to build grottoes with, like the vulgar little boys at the street-corner, but oyster-shells as circulating medium. The oyster-shell as a coin would have this valuable quality : it would not rise or fall in value ; it would not tempt the trading instincts of mankind—instincts as powerful and indestructible as the law of gravitation. It would not tempt the City to import it one minute and export it the next, in sympathy with some foreign instinct which wishes at the moment to export it, or another foreign instinct which wishes at the moment to import it. It would be a plain, unassuming, steady-going counter—an index of value, an instrument of exchange, com-

paratively worthless in itself, and nothing more.

It is too late in the day to abolish the 'precious metals,' as they are called, their 'precious' quality being often the power to set nations by the ears, and cause so-called Governments to make fools of themselves. We cannot go back to tenpenny nails, beads, brass buttons, physic-bottles, quids of tobacco, and other early simplicities of currency. I use the word 'currency' advisedly and without prejudice, as there is an affectation abroad to regard it as a subject the discussion of which is absolutely forbidden.

It would have been better, perhaps, for both India and America if currency had been for some years past a matter of public interest. Schoolboys are generally taught a heap of things that are more ornamental than useful, and what they need to fit them for the fight of life they have often to pick up in the gutter. It would do them no harm, and probably a great deal of good, if their noses were well rubbed in sound currency doctrines. Many of them are quite as ignorant of measures of quantity and value as the Aborigines and early

settlers of America, who were taught that a Dutchman's foot put in a scale always weighed a given number of pounds, neither more nor less, irrespective of pressure. The Dutchman's foot of the present day is, or rather was, silver.

The financial system of England, like most things, was not perfected in a day, nor in many days, without ignorant, bigoted, and, in some cases, interested opposition.

The Bank Charter Act had a rough and stormy childhood, and if it had not been for the *Times* newspaper, might possibly have been killed and buried. Its crime was that it provided for the convertibility of the bank-note with as much certainty as can be arrived at in a world that is necessarily imperfect.

Less than forty years ago, when at any time the City over-traded itself, when it locked up capital in unproductive works or speculations, when it exhausted its credit and almost paralyzed the credit of others, an outcry was sure to be raised for the suspension of this Act, and the Government were roundly abused if they stiffened their backs against this suggestion. Weak-kneed Members of the Administration

were often found to favour this policy of surrender, and to give the Bank of England power to issue notes with a limited obligation of paying gold for them. If the Baring difficulty had occurred in 1841 instead of 1891, the first cry would have been 'Suspend the Charter!' and the directors of the Bank of England and the leading banks would probably have been saved the trouble of acting as 'judicious (or injudicious) bottleholders.'

The solid foundation of English finance is one great principle, determined upon after many years of 'wobbling,' and indulgence in scores of currency heresies. This principle, put into words, is: A gold standard, free mintage, and convertible paper.

The gold standard was adopted because the metal was one of almost universal appreciation, and liable to less fluctuation in value than any other metal. Free mintage meant taking this metal in its pure state, coining it for nothing with the necessary alloy, and handing it back to the public in the shape of sovereigns or half-sovereigns literally 'worth their weight in gold.' A sovereign clipped at the Bank or at a Government office for being light weight need not

disturb the mind of the holder ; it still has its weight value. Many years ago the alloy used was copper, which made 'old red gold' ; of late years the alloy has been silver, which makes the pale yellow gold.

The 'convertible paper' principle, which gives an English banknote a steady exchangeable value all over the world, means that, thanks to the Bank Charter Act, a banknote, when presented in Threadneedle Street, commands its face value immediately in national sovereigns. Certain office regulations exist to provide for certain contingencies, and these, as they are reasonable, are seldom objected to, but if they are, the bank generally finds it wise to admit the objection. In the case of stolen notes, if the numbers are known, these are generally advertised as being 'stopped at the bank.' This is a phrase that may mean anything or nothing. If the thief or any of his connections present the notes it may mean a good deal ; but if those who present them are *bonâ fide* or innocent holders, the Bank must pay the money or be declared bankrupt. Another regulation is to ask the presenter of the note to sign his name at the back, and put

his address under his signature. This is not a legal demand, but is generally acceded to for the sake of peace and quietness.

A story is told of the late Mr. Thornton, the millionaire, who had an account at the Bank, and on one occasion wanted gold for a note of some magnitude. The clerk asked the millionaire in the blindest way to place his signature in the proper place, and received, to his astonishment, a very decided refusal. The millionaire is reported to have said, with a little of the pride of bullion and the bloated capitalist :

‘If you want my signature across your rubbishing paper, you will have to wait a long time before you get it. You have stopped payment before, and may again ; and if I don’t get the gold at once you know what will happen !’

Mr. Thornton’s language, if it has been rightly recorded, was a little strong, and he was probably thinking of the bad financial days when the one-pound note was at six shillings discount, the Corsican Tyrant was rampant, and the poet sang that he would ‘rather have a guinea.’

The idolatrous worship of any metal as

currency, supported by Act of Parliament, is sure to lead to financial and social trouble. The rupee in India and the dollar in America are striking proofs of this. It has adulterated the French currency, with the result that a million and a half sterling of Italian lire were lately circulating in France, not one coin of which is legal tender. Silver is a charming metal for the dinner-table when moulded by the hands of artists like those who flourished in the days of Queen Anne and the early Georges, and who still flourish in Russia. As a steady 'medium of exchange' it has lost its position, if it ever had one, and may one day form the material of spittoons and street-door scrapers.

CURIOSITIES OF PASTE AND SCISSORS

EARLY in the sixties I was sitting at home, at 21, Colebrooke Row, Islington, opposite Charles Lamb's famous tenement on the bank of the New River, when a letter and a parcel came from the editor of the *Cornhill Magazine*, W. M. Thackeray, which required immediate attention. I was connected with the magazine; I had been described by the great editor at the inaugural dinner as 'one of the regular cabs on the stand,' and I was known to be a 'ready writer.' The letter drew my attention to certain illustrations in the parcel which had been prepared for the *Cornhill* by a very distinguished artist, who also wrote some accompanying letterpress which was not sent to me. The artist's pen was not considered

by Thackeray to be equal to his pencil, and I was asked to 'write up' to these pictures generally, but to take Covent Garden Market first and to send in my 'copy' with all possible speed, as time was pressing.

I accepted the task, and, instead of going to bed, I walked down to Covent Garden Market and spent the night there. I saw the market-carts coming in, I mixed with the market-people, I had a drop of 'early purl' at a market-house licensed to open at 2 a.m., and I refreshed my memory about a place that I knew as well as I knew my own mother.

At daybreak I walked quietly back to Islington, had an early breakfast, and by mid-day had finished my woodcut-inspired article for my honoured master. I believe he was satisfied with my journey-work. It was inserted at once, and in a few days I saw a good portion of it quoted in the editorial columns of the *Times* newspaper.

Ten years elapsed, as they say in the play-bill of an Adelphi drama, when a book was published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, written and compiled by Mr. John Timbs, called 'Clubs and Club Life in London.' I

opened the book at a chapter headed 'The Garrick Club,' of which I had just been elected a member. Ten years before, Thackeray, with his usual kindness, offered to put me up for membership at this club, but I told him I could not afford the entrance-fee and subscription at that particular moment.

The chapter headed 'The Garrick Club,' on page 218 of the book, begins thus: 'Mr. Thackeray was a hearty lover of London, and has left us many evidences of his sincerity. He greatly favoured Covent Garden, of which he has painted this clever picture, sketched from "the Garden," where are annually paid for fruits and vegetables some three millions sterling.' Then follows this quotation, without mentioning the *Cornhill Magazine* :

'The two great National Theatres on one side, a churchyard full of mouldy but undying celebrities on the other, a fringe of houses studded in every part with anecdotes and history; an arcade, often more gloomy and deserted than a cathedral aisle; a rich cluster of brown old taverns, one of them filled with the counterfeit presentment of many actors long since silent, who scowl or smile once more from the

canvas upon the grandsons of their dead admirers; a something in the air which breathes of old books, old pictures, old painters, and old authors; a place, beyond all places, one would choose in which to hear the chimes at midnight; a crystal palace—the representative of the present—which peeps in timidly from a corner upon many things of the past; a withered bank that has been sucked dry by a felonious clerk; a squat building, with a hundred columns and chapel-looking fronts, which always stands knee-deep in baskets, flowers, and scattered vegetables; a common centre into which Nature showers her choicest gifts, and where the kindly fruits of the earth often nearly choke the narrow thoroughfares; a population that never seems to sleep, and that does all in its power to prevent others sleeping; a place where the very latest suppers and the earliest breakfasts jostle each other on the footways—such is Covent Garden Market, with some of its surrounding features.'

This is a quotation from the *Cornhill* journey-work article written by me, which Mr. Timbs has attributed to one of the greatest masters of the English language.

‘AN INKWICH’

A good citizen is one who cheerfully performs his duties, and never shirks juries—not even a coroner’s jury. This is what has happened to a good citizen before, and may, with certain unimportant variations, happen again :

A knock at the door and a ring at the bell. Too early for the water rate or the Queen’s taxes. It may be the gas collector. No. ‘What is it?’ ‘A gentleman about parochial business.’ ‘I never vote for Vestrymen.’ It is not that, worse luck! I am wanted on a coroner’s inquest.

The first duty is to view the body, or rather bodies. The victims are two children. I have to visit a slum, inhabited mostly by poor Irish people. An infant has been overlaid in the

night, with the usual result. It was quite an accident and was not due to drink.

The next step is to visit a dead-house in the parish churchyard—a morgue about the size of a small wardrobe. It is a warm July morning. The door is opened and out fly a hundred blue-bottles. I peep in and see the bloated remains of a boy about five years old, the colour of a dirty copper tea-kettle. He was found drowned in that Cockney Venetian part of London, the Regent's Canal.

We then adjourn to the Cock and Bottle Tavern in the High Street, where the coroner is waiting to open the inquest. We are ushered into the Long Room, sometimes used for a convivial 'free-and-easy,' sometimes for the Mumbo-Jumbo ceremonies of an Oddfellows' Lodge. The marks of last night's pots and glasses are on the tables, and there are traces of tobacco-ashes. Windsor chairs and spittoons complete the furniture of the room.

The overlaying case is soon disposed of, but the drowned child gives more trouble. The father (there is no mother) cannot realize the position. The boy, a good boy, came to him at four o'clock in the afternoon, asking if he

might go for a walk. The father consented, and gave him a penny to spend. At six o'clock the father was taken to the dead-house to see the corpse. It was all so sudden and unexpected. Only two hours! Poor father! His only child. It was a good inquest for the Cock and Bottle. The bar downstairs did a brisk counter trade, considering that the day was very young.

Inquests at pot-houses are not yet abolished, but steps are being taken in nearly every parish to provide proper places for these melancholy functions. Our manners are improving.

LICENSED AND UNLICENSED VICTUALLING

'POLICE Raids,' 'Bogus Clubs' and 'Excise Prosecutions' have lately been very familiar headings on the newspaper placards. One day a wretched herd of Polish Jews are seized for gambling in a Whitechapel coffee-shop, while an imaginary Englishman is glorified for winning £30,000 at Monte Carlo. Another day a 'Mr. Walter,' the proprietor of a City 'Social Club,' is fined £50 for selling liquor without a license. The police in both these raiding cases appear to have acted in a straightforward manner. They have not played the favourite part of *agents provocateurs*. They have not imitated that Excise hireling who crept into a *bond fide* club encased in society livery, with his mouth full of lies, filled his official belly with expensive

champagne at the expense of the country, and, after creating a crime for which the proprietor of the club was punished, was lucky enough to escape without a thrashing. This may all be very clever from an Excise point of view, but to many of us it appears to be neither good government, good equity, nor good morals.

The law as to clubs, unlike the law generally, is perfectly clear. It is not only the avowed 'night club' that will have to put its house in order, but Boodle's, White's, and a dozen others will have to alter their constitution and become members' clubs. The bark of the law is worse than its bite, and the process of turning members into shareholders will be simple and inexpensive. The bogus clubs can watch and copy. Those who have weakly talked, thought, or written about licenses in these cases can have little knowledge of our licensing system. A more brutal and swinish system was never invented. It sprang from drink, it wallows in drink—absolute and unmitigated drink—and resists any attempt to temper swilling with recreation.

A box of dominoes, a bagatelle board, a piano, a game of shove-halfpenny, a pack of

greasy cards, are all forbidden, as the duty of public-house frequenters is to drink and not to amuse themselves. 'A good dry skittle-ground' may be allowed in suburban districts, and a billiard-table (with an extra license) may be allowed in town; but, as a rule, the public-house is built, established, licensed, and protected for the sole purpose of selling drink, and keeping up the financial surplus of Rule Britannia government. The signs of these pot-houses are very varied, but they all ought to be called 'The Chancellor of the Exchequer.'

The licensing system is not only swinish and brutal in its conception and practice, but it is asinine in its inelasticity. It can draw no distinction between a pot-house that ought to keep open all night, and one that ought to be closed at sunset. It has only one full license to offer to anybody—the Cock and Bottle at Lambeth, or the Royal Academy in Piccadilly. I will not explain the delicate distinctions between an 'on' and 'off' license, a six or seven days' license, a market-house license, a wine license, a refreshment-house license—which makes it penal to sell a bottle of boiled ginger-beer after ten at night—and an ale and beer license. For

all practical purposes there is but one full license, and whoever possesses this treasure is a full-blown L.V.—a licensed victualler.

A licensed victualler has his cares and liabilities. His house is not his castle; he divides it with the police. To give it the sign of the Castle, with or without the Elephant, only adds insult to injury. At any moment any sober man may present himself, and dab down a pound of sausages in a cabbage-leaf. The full-blown L.V. who does not sell food has to cook those sausages. He has to provide a room with at least one door, one window, one fireplace, a plate, knife and fork, and a salt-box, one chair, and one table. The owner of the sausages must then order one pennyworth of drink, one pennyworth of bread being optional.

The cause of club prosecutions lies deeper than drink and Excise duties. Clubs (many of them) are standing protests against the pig-headed tyranny of our licensing system. They are supported by men who will not be drilled and put to bed at midnight. Clubs give supper-parties, balls, concerts, and other entertainments on prohibited days and at prohibited hours, and will not submit to police supervision. This is

the offensive crime, and yet there are fashionable hotels which, in defiance of their licenses, are now timidly copying the club system. The fight is coming : Government *versus* Social Freedom. At present, as regards social freedom, we are a very long way behind St. Petersburg.

SOOTHING THE SAVAGE BREAST

VERY few London ratepayers know or care how their money is expended by the London County Council and the various Vestries—whether in works of permanent utility or in fancy experiments of a recreative and supposed educational nature.

Music-hall and theatrical proprietors, who are always very heavily rated—the rates forming a percentage on their enormous rentals—may not be aware that in conducting their business they are exposed on all sides to a form of musical competition organized by the municipal authorities and supported out of the local taxation. At present this competition is confined to free open-air concerts given in certain open spaces which are under the control of the London County Council, to say nothing

of the military concerts which are given in the Royal parks, with the consent of the War Office and the Lord Ranger, which are, of course, paid for out of the Imperial taxes.

A proposal to extend this subsidized system to the extent of founding municipal theatres is often before the London County Council, and if a sentimental theatre, why not a sentimental music-hall? There is little chance of such a proposition receiving more than polite official attention, and this latter-day development of well-meant benevolence must for the moment content itself with the efforts made at the People's Palace and Toynbee Hall, and the assisted concerts that are given (mostly on Sunday nights) at many town-halls in various parishes.

The free music provided by the London County Council within the 'administrative county of London'—an area with a radius of twenty miles—is divided amongst forty-six stations. The bands are mixed, some being official, and permanently engaged for a season of thirteen weeks—from May 13 to September 23—every year, and others engaged for the occasion. The following is a complete

list of stations, the figures referring to the programmes provided, which are sold at a penny each. These proceeds, including a small charge for chairs, are used in relief of the expenditure.

	Week-days.	Sundays and Bank Holidays.
	Programmes.	Programmes.
Avondale Park, Notting Dale ...	...	...
Battersea Park ...	250	500
Bishop's Park, Fulham ...	...	...
Blackheath ...	...	...
Bostall Woods ...	...	750
Brockwell Park ...	250	1,000
Chelsea Embankment Gardens ...	...	...
Clapham Common ...	250	750
Clissold Park, Stoke Newington ...	750	750
Finsbury Park ...	250	1,000
Fulham Recreation Ground ...	...	...
Golder's Hill, North End, Hampstead	250	...
Hackney Downs ...	250	...
Highbury Fields ...	250	...
Hilly Fields, Brockley ...	250	...
Island Gardens, Poplar ...	...	100
Kennington Park ...	...	250
Ladywell Recreation Ground ...	100	...
Lincoln's Inn Fields ...	250	250
London Fields ...	200	...
Maryon Park, Charlton ...	100	...
Meath Gardens, Usk Street, Bethnal Green...	...	...
Mill Fields, Clapton ...	250	...
Myatt's Fields, Camberwell ...	250	...

	Week-days.	Sundays and Bank Holidays.
	Programmes.	Programmes.
Newington Recreation Ground, Borough	160	...
Paddington Recreation Ground ...	...	...
Parliament Hill... ..	250	750
Penge Recreation Ground	...	...
Plumstead Common	250	...
Poplar Recreation Ground	...	...
Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith ...	250	500
Royal Victoria Gardens, North Woolwich	...	250
Shandy Street Recreation Ground, Stepney	...	...
Southwark Park	250	500
St. James's Recreation Ground, Ratcliff	...	...
St. John's Gardens, Horseferry Road ...	...	...
Streatham Common	100	...
Sydenham Recreation Ground, Forest Hill	...	...
Telegraph Hill, Hatcham	250	...
Vallance Road Recreation Ground, Whitechapel	...	...
Vauxhall Park	...	...
Victoria Embankment Gardens, Villiers Street... ..	500	1,000
Victoria Park	250	1,000
Wandsworth Common... ..	250	...
Wapping Recreation Ground	...	...
Waterlow Park, Highgate	750	750

One official programme will serve as a specimen.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

PROGRAMME OF MUSIC

TO BE PERFORMED THIS SUNDAY, FROM 7 TO 10 P.M., BY

THE PARKS BAND

(Under the direction of Mr. Warwick Williams).

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME.

1. MARCH HONGROISE 'Faust' *Berlioz.*
2. OVERTURE ... 'Le Mirage' *Warwick Williams.*
3. CHORAL EPILOGUE to 'The Golden Legend' } *Sir A. Sullivan.*
—'God sent His Messenger'
4. GRAND OPERATIC SELECTION—
'Reminiscences of Auber' *Arr. by F. Godfrey.*
5. CORNET SOLO ... 'The Holy City' *Stephen Adams.*
(Sacred Song.)
6. BALLET AIRS in 'Faust' *Gounod.*

(Interval of Fifteen Minutes.)

7. OVERTURE ... 'Tannhäuser' *Wagner.*
8. INTERMEZZO ... 'Rêve du Ballet' *Warwick Williams.*
9. GRAND SELECTION from 'The Bohemian Girl' *Balfe.*
10. { *a.* 'The Pilgrim's Song of Hope' *Batiste.*
 b. SERENADE 'Quand tu Chantes' *Gounod.*
11. GRAND SCÈNE DES HUGUENOTS, 'La Bénédiction'
 des Poignards' (The Benediction of the Daggers) } *Meyerbeer.*
12. GRAND NATIONAL SELECTION—
 'Scotland's Pride' ... *Arr. by C. Godfrey.*

This programme is selected with judgment and good taste, and it shows what excellent music is practically *given* to the public.

The open spaces where these concerts take place are well and ornamentally laid out, and, with one exception, take the position of the old tea-gardens and suburban resorts, such as Beulah Spa, Hornsey Wood House, the Globe at Mile End, and others. The exception is in the matter of refreshments. The London County Council is bound by temperance rules, and provides little more than stony biscuits and boiled ginger-beer. This is not final. The French and Italian café and the German beer-garden are not blind to the commercial possibilities of these parks and open spaces, and the public in this age of Cook's universal tours are getting more cosmopolitan every day. The London County Council is an elected body. One day it will be heckled on this question by its constituents.

THE CAN-CAN OF DEATH

DEAR God, let me plead for that bundle of
bones

Which You gave me a long time ago ;
They are lying much cramped under Kensal
Green stones,

Bearing epitaphs most of us know.
' Here lies,' say the stones, and so far speak the
truth,

If the record is meant, not the dead :
The dead are all angels whose virtues, forsooth,
Are proclaimed from their feet to their head.
Those bones in their lifetime were used to fresh
air,

And to dance till their bodies lacked breath :
They surely at midnight, when no one can
stare,

Might indulge in the Can-Can of Death ?

But the law is against them—the Georgian
decree

Which all 'music and dancing' controls :
The place is not licensed by London's C.C.,
And at twelve they must slink to their holes.
Eternity's not quite so long as it seems,
But the idle find time passes slow ;
Have they got to snore through it in night-
mares and dreams
Till they hear the last trumpeter blow ?

HATCHED HUMANITY

My heart leaps up when I behold a baked-
potato can!

So was it when my life began—

So is it now I am a man.

I'll tell you why :

I never knew a mother's care,

I never heard my father swear

Because the child would cry ;

I never had a living nurse

(For this, I own, I'm none the worse) ;

I've grown on automatic rules,

Quite free from relatives and fools ;

Unmoved by love, untorn by hate—

Another shuttlecock of Fate !

An oven claims my gratitude,

An oven found my infant food,

An oven warmed me into life

(A trifling matter, but still life).

It's like creation in a bog,
Galvanic action, spawn of frog,
The Chambers-Darwin favourite thesis
About the 'Origin of Species'!
A fig for Science!—here I am,
A skunk not worth a tinker's damn,
The product of an Incubator!
That's why I worship all I can
The steaming oven, and the man
Who sells the vulgar baked potato!

PHYSICAL SLOP-WORK

WHENE'ER I take my walks abroad
I Nature's slop-work see ;
The lame, the halt, the deaf, the blind,
Are visible to me,

With hospitals in every street,
Asylums in each field,
And convalescent homes on cliffs
Which aid to cripples yield.

The men with eyes that cannot see,
With ears that cannot hear,
Count just as much on census day
As giant, saint, or peer !

Instead of multiplying heads
As bald as balls of lard,
With crooked, weak, or wooden legs
That cannot walk a yard,

Let Nature turn out much less work
In bloated populations,
And give us quality, not bulk,
In small and healthy nations.

THE OCTOPUS

THE world is full of pretty things
That everyone admires,
And beauty, even though skin-deep,
Is what the world desires.
I'm handicapped, I feel, in life,
For very obvious reasons,
And yet my family always think
I'm lovely in all seasons!

My time is principally passed
In caverns under water ;
My family are mostly sharks,
Except a mermaid daughter.
She sings her songs and combs her hair
To tempt unwary whalers ;
And when we lure them down below
It's bad for those poor sailors.

I cannot say I like the sea,
The bottom, top, or middle ;
It's always asking, night and day,
The same confounded riddle :
' Why was I made except to drown
The surplus population ?'
This is the sad sea wave's remark
At every sea-side station.

It makes me think about myself—
Octopus too unsightly ;
Which are my arms and which my legs
I never can tell rightly.
I frighten children—old and young—
Without the least intention ;
I saved a school from drowning once,
But that I mustn't mention !

I'm now at the Aquarium,
A side-show much belauded ;
My antics, shown three times a day,
Are very much applauded.
The pay is not extremely large—
A weekly bare subsistence ;
I take it meekly, for it breaks
The boredom of existence.

THE MOSQUITO

I AM a restless Mosquito,
Well hated by the world, I know,
For faults that are not mine.
I bite to live (some live to bite) ;
I sting from sheer necessity, not spite—
I would my lot were thine.

I'd take your bites, you'd love my sting,
And bear the petty pains they bring
Just like a Hindoo saint.
I would not blame you, 'bottle fly ;
You have to live the same as I—
A beauty without paint.

We cannot all be butterflies,
Or larks that carol in the skies—
Take life for what it's worth ;
We've all our wretched aches and pains,
Our losses now, and now our gains,
A little while on earth.

And when we get our final call—
Mosquito, pole-cat, skunk, and all
The vermin meek or bold—
We shall not for the verdict quake ;
We've lived our lives for Nature's sake,
And done what we were told.

THE CAB-‘OS’

(*Os*, a bone.—*Latin Dictionary*).

DEDICATED TO THE FRAMERS OF THE LONDON
TRAFFIC BILL.

Poor meek-eyed, weak-kneed, patient, plodding
 hack,
 Ill-fed, ill-stabled, weary, footsore slave,
Galled with ill-fitting trappings on your back,
 Your ribs mere bars—much like a music-
 stave;
Your home’s a chilly gutter, called a ‘rank,’
 You pass your gloomy life there night and
 day—
The ‘shelter’s’ not for horses lean and lank,
 Whose chief reward’s a wisp of mouldy hay.

You work and perish like a wretched beast—
A beast of burden, born without a goal.
Your rump-fed master's like you, but, at least,
The parsons tell him that he's got a soul.
He sits in comfort with his jaws well greased,
With eggs and bacon, toast and coffee, fed,
The 'shelter' gives him warmth from labour
eased ;
You'll find your well-earned shelter when
you're dead.

OLD SMITHFIELD

(1837).

TURN 'em down 'Osier Lane, you fool !

Turn 'em down 'Osier Lane !

That [*adjective*] bullock means tossin' like 'ell !

Turn 'em down 'Osier Lane !

By Gawd ! 'E's dun it ! The shop-front's gone !

'E's smashed ev'ry [*adjective*] pane !

'Ere comes the [*adjective*] shopman's blokes ;

We can't settle this with a pot.

Pole-axe the [*adjective*] hanimal, Bill ;

I'll face all the [*adjective*] lot !

If they won't wash it down with some [*adjective*]
max,

My mauleys will show 'em wot's wot !

THE ORGAN-GRINDER

I WAS grinding one day at my organ,
In a street that was not worth a *sou*,
The weather was chilly and foggy,
And the nose of my *donah* looked blue ;
She pined for her native Whitechapel,
Her trotters, her sausage and mash,
And she uttered in *lingua Costana*
A word I must *spell* with a dash !
And I didn't feel much more angelic,
For I thought of my own sunny South,
Which I'd bartered for symptoms rheumatic,
And little to put in my mouth ;
When the thing was made worse by a peeler,
Who'd told me to move on before,
' *Malatesta !* ' I said, ' for what reason ?'
' You're playing at Jacoby's door !'

'*Inferno*!' I said; 'and who's Jacoby?
His music I play, night and day.
You call me a "nuisance"—he made me,
If I'm fined, the *maestro* must pay.'
But the peeler said: 'That's not the fellow.
If you come to the station, you'll see.
My man's not a *ma* nor an *estro*;
He's the cove that they calls an M.P.'

THE SOUP-KITCHEN

THEY thinks werry much of their [*adjective*] soup.

I've tried it, and knows what it is ;

It's not worth a pint of Old Worrall's ' Leg,'*

Though he charges you tuppence for his.

They makes you peel off, and go into a tank,

And they scrubs you as if you was wood,

As they scrapes off a bloomin' three coatin's of
mud,

They cods you it's all for your good !

Then they bundles you out in the nippin' cold
air,

With a basin of slops in your guts,

And expec's you to speak and behave like a
saint,

'Cos they've soaped you, and cleaned off the
smuts !

* A celebrated ' Leg o' Beef ' soup.

I don't care a curse for their [*adjective*] soup ;
I'll grub upon scraps, and won't wince,
But never again that there [*adjective*] tank !
I haven't been warm ever since !

THE RICH MAN'S BURDEN

**PITY the sorrows of a millionaire,
Whose pampered limbs have borne him to
your door !**

**Teach him the burden of his wealth to bear ;
Teach him to live and utilize his store ;
Teach him to realize his God-like might,
To fight the curse of hunger for the poor ;
Teach him to punish wrong and shelter right,
And keep earth's victims from the workhouse
door ;**

**Teach him to live a life of ceaseless care
In doing good alike to young and old :
He'll find his burden then as light as air—
His mind no longer jaundiced by his gold.**

THE POOR MAN'S BURDEN

THE sooty rain has soaked the sullen street,
And evening falls upon it like a funeral
shroud.

Against the wall with muddy, ill-clad feet,
You see a shrinking, crouching, phantom
crowd ;

Children they may be—old before they're
young—

With lean, pinched bodies clothed in decent
rags,

Sent by their elders, who are hunger stung,
To wait for 'pieces' on the butcher's flags.

They shiver as they push to keep their place,
Eager to get their tattered wallets filled ;

Hardship is written on each tiny face—

Brats of an Empire, born but to be killed !

THE HAPPY EXILE

I AM a lively Frenchman, and I love your brown
stout beer ;

I love your kidney puddings, though they make
me rather queer ;

I love your lumps of bleeding beef—I love to say
‘Goddam!’

I sing you ‘Rule, Britannia!’ too, when very
drunk I am ;

I love your balls of fiery flour—potatoes—
what you call ?

I love your game of cricket, but I do not love
the ball ;

I love your lovely English miss who makes me
fly from France ;

And much I love the gay can-can—but this I
mustn’t dance !

I love your cabs—a bob a mile ; I love your
penny bus ;

I love your penny saveloys—for better or for
wus ;

I love your soup—so thick and strong, I cut it
with a knife ;

I like to see your boxing-match—the cream of
London life ;

I do not dress in wooden shoes, nor live on
frogs in France ;

But much I love the gay can-can, which here I
mustn't dance !

I love to pay the income-tax, and rates and
taxes, too ;

I love your tripe and onions much, and also
Irish stew ;

I do not care for haggis Scotch, nor pies they
make of pork ;

But much I love the good pale ale and ham
that comes from York !

You keep me here, you treat me well, I shall
not pine for France ;

But I must dance the gay can-can and take my
blooming chance !

EAT YOUR PUDDING AND HOLD YOUR TONGUE

THE one thing I loathe is the gift of the gab,
Though its praises a poet has sung ;
I much prefer people not given to blab,
Who got through their prattle when young.
To all that will listen I give this advice—
When the pudding's served out take a jolly big
slice,
And eat it—and hold your tongue !
Eat your pudding and hold your tongue,
Do the same whether old or young ;
If the pudding seems nice, take a jolly big
slice :
Eat your pudding and hold your tongue !

There's a jaw-mill that stands in the district
South-West,
Where pudding is eaten galore ;
But they pile up the words in a way I detest,
And the taxes I also abhor ;

They babble by day and they babble by night,
Till they get their 'Supply,' and then out goes
the light ;

They eat, but they don't hold their jaw !
Eat your pudding and hold your tongue !

The Boss of the jaw-mill appears to be meek ;
He gets what he wants with a nod.
They call him a 'Speaker,' because he don't
speak—

The ways of the jaw-mill are odd.
If the Boss of the show can exist without speech,
What need has each member to mumble or
screech,

And talk when he'd much better plod ?
Eat your pudding and hold your tongue,
Do the same whether old or young ;
If the pudding seems nice, take a jolly big
slice :

Eat your pudding and hold your tongue !

THIRD CLASS—THEN AND NOW

1837.

AN open box—a cattle-truck,
Exposed to wind, and rain, and muck.
The flap-door falls—a raking plane
Up which you run your truck to gain.
Within you stand, a herd of swine—
This on a first-class London line.

1899.

A carpet floor, a cushioned seat,
A toilet service, all complete,
A sixty-mile-an-hour feed,
A table-d'hôte in spite of speed ;
A chair in which to sleep or smoke—
All things to ease the travelling yoke.

The panorama rushes by,
A picture pleasing to the eye ;
The woods, the streams, the fields, the hills,
Announcing every kind of pills ;
You read them all and cannot tell
The pill that's best to keep you well ;
So go to sleep before you're flustered,
And dream you're taking ' Beecham's Mustard.'

BRITONS NEVER, NEVER!——

(Many London murderers are still undiscovered, and the burglars who sacked the jeweller's shop in Piccadilly are nearly forgotten.)

'Tis now the molly-coddling hour of night,
When pot-boys yawn, and pubs chuck out their
drunks :

Now rowdy ruffians, full of gin and fog,
Are free to crack a crib or cut a throat.
They know the over-rated peeler's eye
Is fixed on pot-house doors ('tis half-past
twelve)

And streets where favoured Cyprians ply their
trade,

Who pay a kerbstone rent to prowl at ease.
The free-born Briton, like a well-whipped cur,

Discreetly bowing low to Curfew law,
Slinks home, his jingo tail between his legs,
And (*sotto voce*) 'Rule, Britannia!' sings,
Thinking of taxes, rates, and many things.

BLUE BLOOD

I WAS born a younger son,
Which is anything but fun,
For my brother's got the title and the money ;
He's the Earl of Donkeyshire,
And a full-blown British Peer,
And his speeches in the House of Lords are
funny.

He's as stingy as a Jew,
And he always looks so blue
When my Lady Mother has to pay my losses ;
He thinks I ought to work,
Like a shop-boy or a clerk,
And leave to him the sport of backing 'osses.

He is just the sort of prig
Who will learn the statesman's rig
And be honoured for his dulness and his
riches ;

He is cautious, stupid, safe,
And no Government need chafe,
For he'll act 'just like a Blue-book dressed in
breeches.'

As for me, I cannot tell
If my words I rightly spell,
For I never cared a rap for education ;
I am classed with unlicked cubs,
But they like me at the clubs,
And think I'm quite a credit to my station.

Though I look a Bond Street swell
Of the type you know so well,
My pocket-money comes from playing billiards ;
And I look so jolly green,
That my game is never seen,
And I owe those damned infernal tailors
milliards !

Do they ever dun me ? No !
For they're shrewd enough to know
That 'Blue Blood's' always bound to marry
money ;
Some toiling millionaire,
Whose bullion makes you stare,
Is sure to find the younger son his honey.

In this easy-going age
I can always try the stage—
A last resource of mashers 'on the make.'
With clothes without a flaw
My name is sure to draw,
And when I cannot act, I'll 'fake.'

MIDGET MAYORS AND ALDERMAN- NIKINS

WE'VE had a reign of Tweedledum,
And one of Tweedledee ;
We've borne the rule of Bumbledom—
Re-labelled L.C.C.
We're now to try another 'dum'
Laid down on City rules—
A group of Thirty Turtledoms
Will seize the Vestry stools,
With midget Mayors, and sword and mace,
And civic faults and sins,
And Aldermen who'll be a race
Of Aldermannikins.

Beadles who 're roughly told 'Go hang,'
Can scarce believe their eyes.
Poor things ! they feel as great a pang
As when a giant dies !

The City's glory's now ignored ;
We've seen it at its best :
A rival Munching House and Lord
Will rise up in the West.
The future Whittington will stare,
A double chance to see—
'Once Lord of East of Temple Bar,
And twice of West to be !'

‘TIME! GENTLEMEN, TIME!’

**THE Frenchman takes his eau sucré,
His coffee, rum, or bière,
At any hour of night or day—
He has no law to fear ;
He plays his games of chance or skill
In open view of all ;
He doesn't seek a ‘bogus club’
And slink behind a wall.**

**The Germans, like the French, are free
From coddling ‘half-past twelves ;’
They eat and drink, and sing and dance,
At hours to please themselves.
Though ‘blood and iron’ are in the air,
Compelling all to fight,
Apart from this, their tavern hours
Are not cut short at night.**

Italians, Belgians, Russians, Swiss,
All gape at Angleterre ;
Britannia ruling waves of drink
Makes Europe grin and stare.
To eat, and drink, and sleep like swine,
Is not their hearts' desire ;
Their café is a 'poor man's club,'
Which aims at something higher.

THE SAME HAT FITS ME STILL

I AM a truly modest man, though petted like a
Duke ;

I've won most games I've tried to win, though
mostly by a fluke ;

I'm author, bankrupt, ex-M.P.—I'm anything I
will ;

And yet my head's not swollen much—the same
hat fits me still.

I've written plays that took the town, and
dined with prince and peer ;

I've written books that made them frown, which
Mudie bought with fear ;

I've won the Derby more than once, by impu-
dence and skill ;

And yet my head's not swollen much—the same
hat fits me still.

I've painted pictures all too sweet, that crowds
have flocked to see—

In fact, the man called Crichton couldn't candles
hold to me ;

I've edited the *Times* and *Punch* when both
their guides were ill ;

And yet my head's not swollen much—the same
hat fits me still.

I've been an actor-manager, the greatest of my
kind—

A piece that cost ten thousand pounds did not
disturb my mind ;

I've seen in letters ten feet high my name on
every bill ;

And yet my head's not swollen much—the same
hat fits me still.

I'm now an active L.C.C., a ruler of to-day,
A fussy Aldermannikin, with much to do and
say ;

I'll rule with iron rod the town, with all my
strength and might ;

And yet my head's not——Damn it! Yes! My
hat's infernal tight !

BISHOPS THEN AND NOW

THERE was a jolly Bishop once,
Who bore the name of Still ;
He praised all ale, both new and old,
Of which he took his fill.
His wife he called a malt-worm, too,
And made her pass the bowl ;
He hated toast-and-water men,
And loved a thirsty soul.

There was a greater Bishop still,
A broad-souled man—Magee ;
To make him Archevêque of York
They moved him from his See ;
The words that prelate said should be
On adamant engraved—
' I'd rather England drunk and free,
Than sober and enslaved.'

LYING ON THE TABLE

‘The final report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws—the substance of which has already been published—has now been formally submitted to the Queen, and was last night laid upon the table of the House of Commons.’—*Daily Paper*, July 5, 1899.

Its rest has come—a lasting peace,
A happy and a sweet release.
Beneath the Speaker’s weary eye,
There on ‘the table’ let it lie ;
Free from all controversial rubs,
Deaf to the claims of clubs and pubs,
Pillowed on Blue-books, let it die.
Down, down, down, down—
Down amongst the Blue-books
Let it lie !

THE VOLUNTEERS

THERE was a little man, and he had a little gun,
With bullets made of *bond-fide* lead, lead, lead ;
The Horse Guards at him laughed,
The Army winked and chaffed
At the perky way he cocked his little head,
head, head.

He was *Punch's* standing joke,
Was snubbed by pipeclay folk,
But still he kept on growing all the same,
same, same ;
And the 'Brook Green Volunteer' can now
return the sneer
That never checked his numbers nor his fame,
fame, fame.

OUR STREET SOLDIERS

My collar's marked with C
And a number— 23 ;
And, cold or 'ot, my clothes is all the same.
I'm put upon a ' beat,'
With barges on my feet—
' Bobby Atkins,' if you arst me, is my name.

My brother's dressed in red,
With an 'elmet on 'is 'ed,
And ' Tommy' is the name he sticks in front ;
He's a jolly sight too fine
To own 'is fam'ly's mine,
Though I lick him into blooming fits with
blunt !

He's a hero, so he thinks,
 When the boozers stand 'im drinks,
 And talk about the Balaclaver charge ;
 I'm a 'peeler,' dressed in blue,
 And the common work I do
 Is never writ in journals fine and large.

I'm arf the blooming day
 Keepin' cabs and vans at bay,
 As yokels gape their way across the Strand.
 At night I watch the pubs,
 To see that drunken cubs
 Don't break the laws that license arf the land.

I'm flummux'd by the clubs,
 Those pretty bogus pubs,
 That play old 'ell and Tommy with the law.
 The pickpockets may pick,
 'Jack the Ripper' rip and stick—
 My post is at the publican's back-door.

When my time for 'glory' comes,
 I shall find it in the slums—
 A Balaclaver row in Seven Dials ;
 Though the odds is ten to one,
 Yet I mustn't cut and run—
 My duty is to face these sloggin' trials.

They may kick me into pulp,
And my life-blood make me gulp,
If I live I know I've got a pauper's ration ;
But ribbons, stars and stripes
Are not for gutter-snipes ;
We've not a blasted inch of decoration !

SHELLEY AND WATER

ON A PORK PIE

I **ARISE** from dreams of thee,
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When my breathing's rather hard,
And my chest feels rather tight.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?—
To an open window sweet.

PARIS

'The French President has just opened a new street in the centre of Paris.'—*French Paper*.

'A street there is in Paris famous,
For which no rhyme our language yields,
Rue Neuve des Petits Champs its name is—
The New Street of the Little Fields.'

THACKERAY : *Bouillabaisse*.

My dear old friend, my Lord and Master,
The foe of snobs, the friend of scamps,
You're always with me as a pastor
While tramping in the Little Champs.
In 'New' and 'Cross' Streets—pretty 'Dials'
(French 'Dials' only number six)—
And *Place des Victoires*, full of trials,
That land the stranger in a fix,
Where Fourteenth Louis strides his prancer.
Louis Carthorse, my royal friend,
Your statue is the pride of France, sir,
And sturdy guide-post to the end.

The *Bouillabaisse* smells strong of saffron,
The *Chambertin* is coarse and rough ;
Bring me a *bisque* of *crabs*—no gammon—
And after that a *tranche de bœuf*.
They're *Hausmannising* all the Quarter
With streets of interest bereft,
Rues ' *Croix* ' and ' *Neuve* ' they're bound to
slaughter,
The 'ancient ways' are all that's left.

NEW YORK

AMERICA, I thank ye

For blessings purely Yankee,
For Boyton, who saves my body at sea,
While my soul's saved by Moody and Sankey

VENICE

You stand in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
A cook-shop and a sewer on either hand ;
The sewer is open, and the cook-shop tries
To sell you *Vino d' Asti*—common brand !
You think of days when Borgia ruled the
roast—
Her palace on the water still is seen ;
But now the hucksters point to it and boast—
'A Turkish bath now open, cheap and
clean.'

BERLIN

GUTE Morgen, Mein Herren, und Leben sie
wohl,

Ich lieb much the Garten called Thier,
And Unter den Linden's a very nice place,
Though hotels there I find rather dear ;
The Kraut which is sauer, the Fleisch which is
schwein,

Is good with the bright lager beer ;
But where they make Hochheim, and what it's
made of,

I have not the slightest idea.

GREECE

MAID OF ATHENS, ere we part,
Give, oh ! give me back my heart.
The moon declines to shine to-night,
There's not a jet of gas alight—
The brutal Co. have cut it off !
Think not, my sweet, I mean to scoff.
When Greek meets Greek and doesn't pay,
They act in that commercial way ;
So, Maid of Athens, ere I go—
My star, my life, I love you so—
Your eyes must light my stumbling feet,
I have no other light, my sweet.

The I-O-U-nian Isles of Greece,
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Are sordid haunts of trading peace,
Of grimy hucksters, old and young.

Poor Sappho burned, but burned herself,
So no one could or would ill-treat her ;
But burning gas and wanting pelf,
They'd sue her promptly as per meter.

THE GIFT OF THE GAB

It s a 'stonishin' thing, that 'ere gift o' the gab ;

It quite puts the stuns upon me.

Last Saturday night I went out on the grab—

I might as well say on the spree.

I went to a meetin'—a lectur', I think—

Where a cove was a-spoutin' like mad.

I didn't want 'bacca, I didn't want drink,

Though a D's worth was all as I'd had.

He talked—s'welp my Gawd!—well, he talked
like a book.

I'd not faked a cly ! There I stands !

Lawd perish me blind, 'fore I'd taken my hook

I made one in the showin' of hands !

SIXPENCE A MILE

DEDICATED TO MR. JESSE COLLINGS, M.P.

WITH a neat rubber tyre, a carbuncle lamp,
A bright-harnessed hack of the Tattersall
stamp,

I feel like a sportsman, and not like a scamp,
And drive like a masher who's out on the ramp.

For sixpence a mile? No!

A shilling a mile,

I'll drive to the devil in Badminton style!

Now study my 'form,' I'm the Government pet,
I act like a coachman, but look like a vet;
They give me a number in Government style,
And think they have booked me for sixpence a
mile.

For sixpence a mile? Perhaps!

Winking the while,

I drive, but not quite in the Badminton style!

A gent in his pleasure should never be balked.
 If he's out with a 'niece' who is pretty well
 chalked,

I call her 'my lady'—that's two bob a mile!—
 And drive like a whip, in the Badminton style.

 For sixpence a mile? No!

 A shilling a mile,
 And a little bit extra to pay for the style!

I never see nothing, I always know less;
 I'm deaf, blind, and dumb when a gent's in a
 mess;

I'm outside the radius when s'pœnas they fly,
 And even the beaks and the Yard I defy.
 For two or three thick uns, a drink, and a
 smile,

I'll drive through the Law Courts in sports-
 man-like style!

'I leave it to you, sir—I leave it to you'—
 I know when a bounder's a bit of True Blue;
 I give him my number, he gives me a quid,
 And I go to the play with my missus and kid;

And while I am there I reflect, with a smile :

‘ The law thinks I’m working for sixpence a
mile !

For sixpence a mile ? Yes,

For sixpence a mile—

And a little bit extra to pay for the style !’

THE WINDOW CLEANER*

BABYLONIAN MANSIONS, 1898

How dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low !
The fighting sparrows in the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles.
Half-way down hangs one who cleaneth win-
dows—dreadful trade !
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head ;
The empty cabs that crawl along the road
Appear like snails, and yon tall Pickford's van
Diminished to a truck in charge of boys—
almost too small for sight.
The whistling fiends that chafe the public ear
Cannot be heard so high.
I'll look no more, lest my brain turn
And the deficient sight topple down headlong.
(Rings for the ' lift.')

* Shakespeare was indebted for much of ' King Lear ' to Holinshed's ' Chronicle,' and I in turn am indebted to Shakespeare for much of the above.

FAUSTLING AND MARGUERITTLE

ACT I.

You know the pretty German tale of *Faust* and
Marguerite ;
You know the pretty opera tunes you hear in
every street ;
You know a dozen bright burlesques in England
and in France,
In which the Faustling - Marguerittles show
their legs and dance ;
You know a grinning man in red, the Devil, if
you please,
Disguised in German prettily as *Mephisto-
pheles*—
Well, that's my pa, who's now nailed down with
sulphuretted gout,
And I, as *Tempter*, take his place because he
can't get out.

I've brought his fossil spelling-book—a book
not up to much—
Containing many 'chestnut' tricks no music-
hall would touch ;
A *Monte Carlo* 'system,' which is bound to fail,
of course—
No word about the 'three-card trick,' or how
to back a horse.
The gentle craft called 'confidence' and Bou-
logne baccarat,
Though known to every sucking-babe, are quite
beyond papa.

ACT II.

I seek for *Faust*, and find him, not in study
dark and grim,
But dozing at a West End club, with stays to
keep him slim.
His teeth are gone, his hair is gone, but Clark-
son sees to that ;
His tailor props him up with clothes, his hatter
with a hat.
I book him for my *Faustling* part, a part he
wants to play ;
I seek a Marguerittle next, who lives across
the way.

She's in the *Patchouli* Arcade, a shop where
gloves are sold,
And she, the lovely seller, is as pretty as she's
bold.

A bogus ring, a necklet made of diamonds from
the Cape,

A supper at the *Sans Pareil*, soon put my plot
in shape.

We are not bored with *Martha*, or a nurse of
any kind,

And when her brother *does* turn up, we're not
surprised to find

A private in the Ramrod Guards, whose views,
quite 'up to date,'

Are such as every business man is pleased to
contemplate.

ACT III.

Old Martha bullied me because I worked with-
out her aid ;

I quite expected this, and so, to please the
ancient maid,

Her sixty years I made sixteen, and made her
lovely, too,

And got a Faustling, quite a boy, to walk her
in the 'Zoo.'

I thought how cleverly I'd worked, and how
I'd beaten pa,
Till Faustling suddenly appeared, my clever
schemes to mar.

He saw my lively youthful nurse, and bolted
with her straight ;

Then Marguerittle flopped on me, and said I
was 'her fate.'

I sent young Faustling down a trap, and soon
got rid of him ;

But when I tried the spell on her, she'd neither
sink nor swim.

I swore in demon double Dutch, our favourite
dialect ;

I burnt my stock of sulphur squibs without the
least effect.

The book's a fraud ; I'm going now to take her
down to pa.

Perhaps he'll take her on himself, and I shall
call her 'ma.'

THE CONDESCENDING DUCHESS IN THE 'BUS

THEY calls me 'Oily Sam,'
And so I s'pose I am,
 Though words is only squitter after all ;
I'm not a bloomin' ass
Who thinks he's tip-top class—
 I'm a coster, and I glories in my stall.

When I goes about the world,
With my 'knockers'* nicely curled,
 The book I likes to study is the street ;
I don't think much of schools,
They mannyfacters fools
 Who never seems to feel their clumsy feet.

* 'Knockers' (or 'Newgate knockers') — well-greased side curls, like meat-hooks, common amongst costers and butchers' boys.

My models, I confess,
Are rather nuts on dress—
 The tofts as never likes to make a fuss ;
But one's above 'em all,
A model that I call
 The condescending Duchess in the 'bus !

She's a pictur—that she is,
With her 'orty blue-blood phiz—
 The way she hands the penny, s'elp me! 's
 grand !
She stops 'em at the ' Stores '
In a style that I adores,
 And I follows like a puppy in her 'and.

She waits her turn as mild
As any coster's child,
 While counter-jumpers dares to call her
 'mum.'
She thinks it's quite the thing,
Danglin' parcels on a string,
 And she does it in a way that strikes me
 dum'.

My donah's pretty smart,

And in our donkey-cart

We gives the Duchess lots of points, you'll
bet.

Yet both of us must own

We wants a lot of tone

When pullin' up for drops of 'eavy wet.

We've not quite caught the air

Of old Grossveener Square—

My donah thinks that air's not worth a cuss ;

My donah's not quite right,

She must watch with all her might

My condescending Duchess in a 'bus !

MOTHER WAS SO HAPPY THAT SHE DIED

THEY calls it Dossers' Block,
'Cos it stands near Dossers' Dock,
An' they've built the bloomin' parlours in the
skies.

Our garret's underground,
Where six is allus found—
We can't sing ' Home, sweet home,' but yet we
tries.

'Home, home, sweet, sweet home'—
I s'pose they couldn't make one if they tried ?
We lives in prison cells,
Built by charitable swells,
An' mother was so happy that she died !

The manager's a skunk,
Who thinks we're allus drunk,
As if we'd got the coin to spend on booze ;

We're bound by stone-jug rules,
Like paupers, thieves, and fools,
An' can't behave exactly as we choose.

‘ Home, home, ’ etc.

The gates is shet at ten,
An' the gas is put out then,
An' we mustn't nail a pictur on the walls.
Our Billy, killed at play
By a drunken drayman's dray,
Is taken down each time the 'spector calls.

‘ Home, home, ’ etc.

If we grumbles, then we knows
It's a kick and ‘ Out you goes, ’
As lots of 'em is waitin' for the ‘ flat. ’
For this they has the cheek
To draw eight bob a week,
An' never lets us keep a dog or cat !
‘ Home, home, sweet, sweet home ’—
I s'pose they couldn't make one if they tried ?
We lives in prison cells,
Built by charitable swells,
An' mother was so happy that she died !



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